July 6, 2009 49145 $3.95

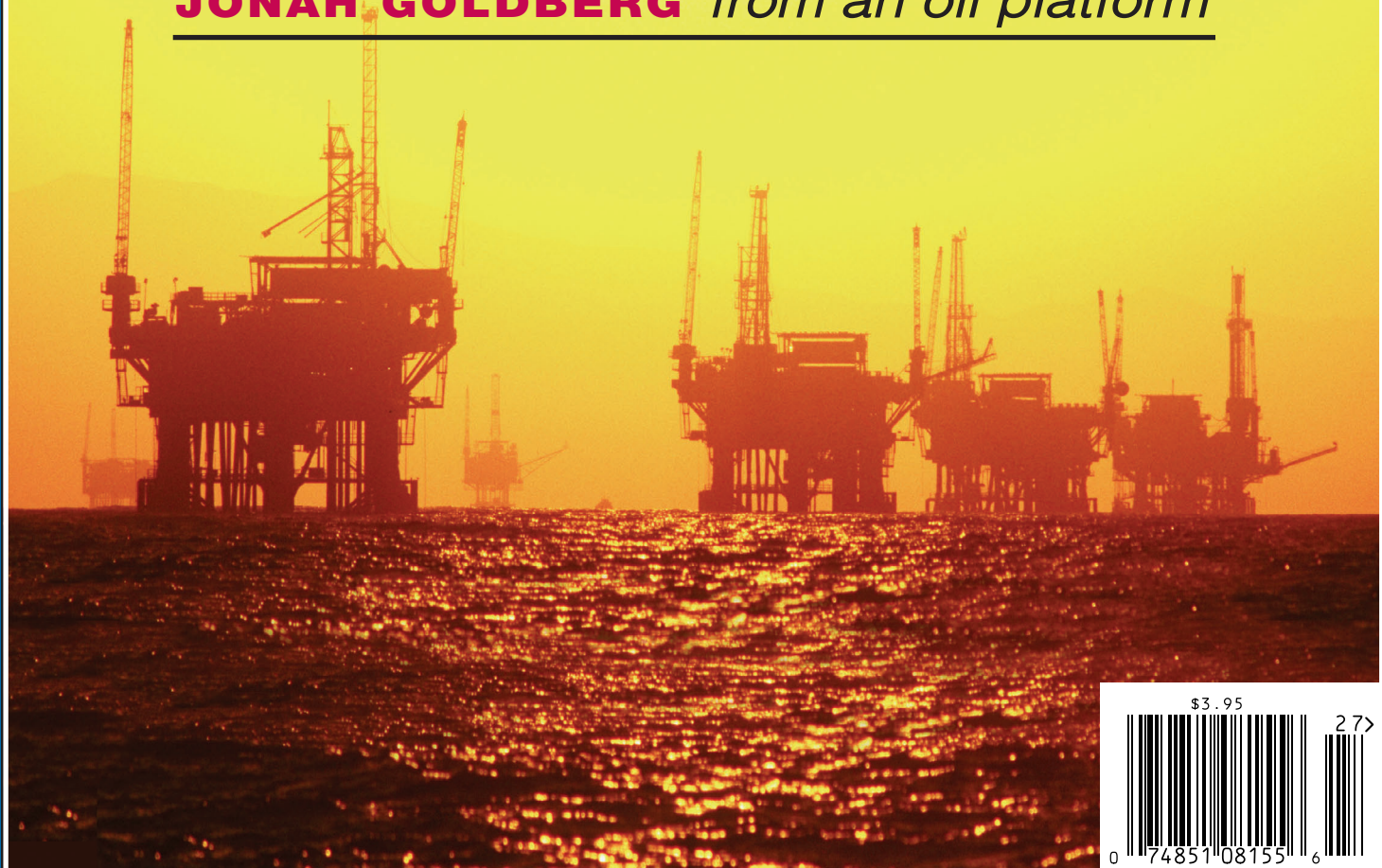
RAMESH PONNURU on THE REAL REAGAN

NATIONAL REVIEW

IRAN IN TURMOIL
—David Pryce-Jones

The Beauty of DRILLING

JONAH GOLDBERG *from an oil platform*

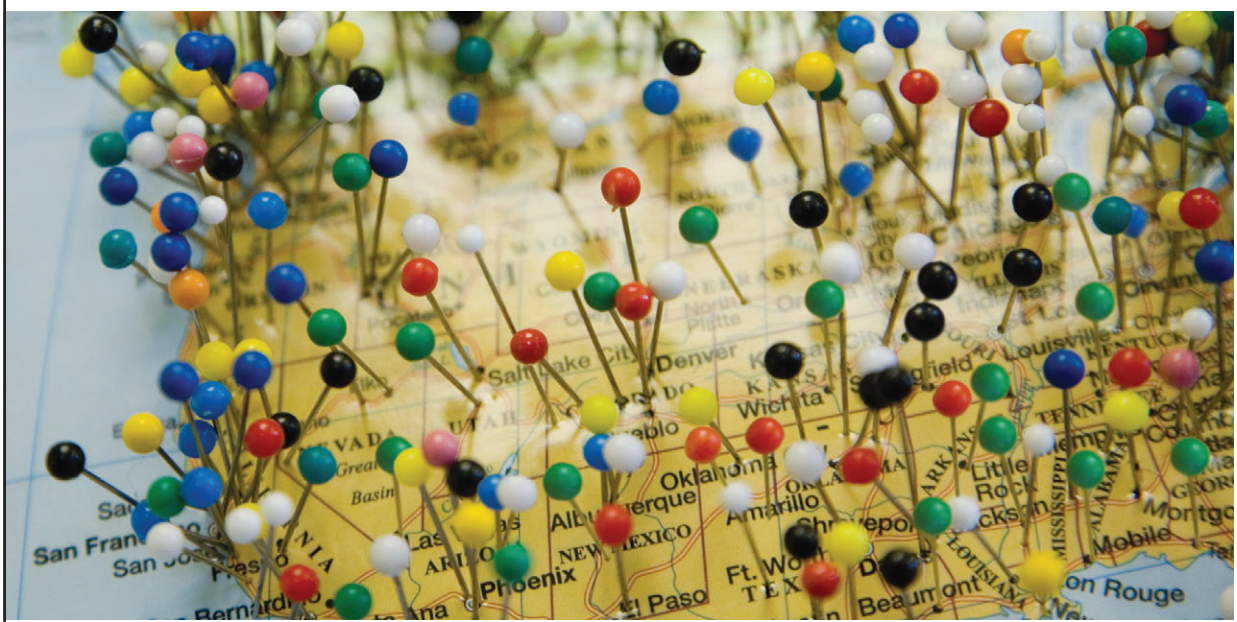


$3.95
0 74851 08155 6

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

www.nationalreview.com

Self-employed Americans across the country are asking for affordable health care... **over a million of them are REALTORS®**



Unlike many in the work force who have an employer to help offset their health insurance costs, the self employed do not. They pay the full amount of their health insurance coverage. These entrepreneurs are vital to a healthy economy and to our communities. They deserve access to a health care plan they can afford.

Congress: As the health reform debate moves forward, don't forget the self-employed.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
REALTOR®
The Voice for Real Estate®

To learn more, logon to **www.realtor.org**

*REALTORS® are real estate professionals who are members of the National Association of REALTORS®

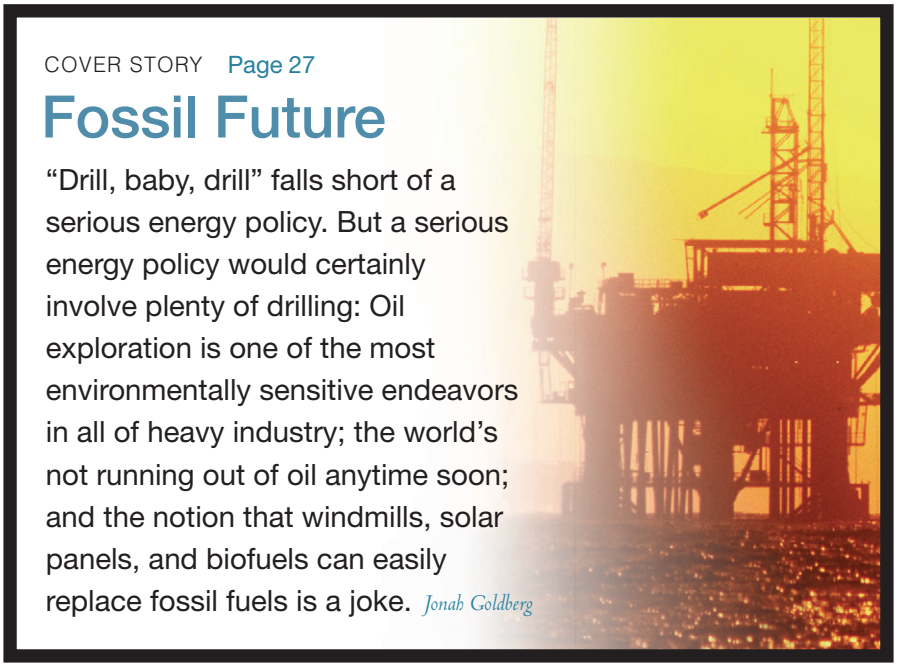
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

NATIONAL REVIEW

JULY 6, 2009 | VOLUME LXI, NO. 12 | www.nationalreview.com

David Pryce-Jones on Iran . . . p. 16



COVER STORY Page 27

Fossil Future

"Drill, baby, drill" falls short of a serious energy policy. But a serious energy policy would certainly involve plenty of drilling: Oil exploration is one of the most environmentally sensitive endeavors in all of heavy industry; the world's not running out of oil anytime soon; and the notion that windmills, solar panels, and biofuels can easily replace fossil fuels is a joke. *Jonah Goldberg*

COVER: RALPH A. CLEVENGER/CORBIS

ARTICLES

16 **GREEN FLAGS AND BROWN SHIRTS** *by David Pryce-Jones*
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's 'reelection' reveals a deep and restive Iranian opposition.

18 **BLAME NOT THE DEREGULATOR** *by Stephen Spruiell*
It was market distortions that created the bubble.

20 **EUROPE'S DISINTEGRATING LEFT** *by John O'Sullivan*
Analyzing the recent elections.

23 **JAPANESE CROSSROADS** *by Duncan Currie*
Does our most important Asian ally face another decade of decline?

25 **UNDIES, COMRADE?** *by Jay Nordlinger*
The problem of products bearing Communist symbols.

FEATURES

27 **FOSSIL FUTURE** *by Jonah Goldberg*
New supplies of oil and coal must be part of any rational energy policy.

33 **MISREMEMBERING REAGAN** *by Ramesh Ponnuru*
The Gipper still has lessons to teach—just not the ones we usually hear.

36 **THE REDHUNTERS** *by John J. Miller*
A remarkable duo's pursuit of former spies and historical truth.

BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

40 **THE DARK LORD**
David Pryce-Jones recounts the life and excesses of Lord Byron.

42 **HEART OF DARKNESS**
Andrew Stuttaford reviews The Bloody White Baron: The Extraordinary Story of the Russian Nobleman Who Became the Last Khan of Mongolia, *by James Palmer.*

44 **WHAT GRANDMA READ**
Terry Teachout reviews What America Read: Taste, Class, and the Novel, 1920–1960, *by Gordon Hutner.*

46 **FILM: MISANTHROPY ON TOUR**
Ross Douthat reviews Away We Go.

47 **THE STRAGGLER: MAGNIFICENT FOLLY**
Forty years later, John Derbyshire appraises the significance of the first Moon landing.

SECTIONS

2 **Letters to the Editor**
4 **The Week**
38 **The Bent Pin** . . . . . *Florence King*
39 **The Long View** . . . . . *Rob Long*
45 **Poetry** . . . . . *Richard O'Connell*
48 **Happy Warrior** . . . . . *Mark Steyn*

NATIONAL REVIEW (ISSN: 0028-0038) is published bi-weekly, except for the first issue in January, by NATIONAL REVIEW, Inc., at 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. © National Review, Inc., 2009. Address all editorial mail, manuscripts, letters to the editor, etc., to Editorial Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Address all subscription mail orders, changes of address, undeliverable copies, etc., to NATIONAL REVIEW, Circulation Dept., P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668; phone, 386-246-0118, Monday–Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. Eastern time. Adjustment requests should be accompanied by a current mailing label or facsimile. Direct classified advertising inquiries to: Classifieds Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016 or call 212-679-7330. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NATIONAL REVIEW, Circulation Dept., P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668. Printed in the U.S.A. RATES: $59.00 a year (24 issues). Add $21.50 for Canada and other foreign subscriptions, per year. (All payments in U.S. currency.) The editors cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts or artwork unless return postage or, better, a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NATIONAL REVIEW

JULY 6 ISSUE; PRINTED JUNE 18
EDITOR
Richard Lowry

Senior Editors
Richard Brookhiser / Jay Nordlinger
Ramesh Ponnuru / David Pryce-Jones
Managing Editor Jason Lee Steorts
Literary Editor Michael Potemra
Executive Editor Christopher McEvoy
National Political Reporter John J. Miller
Art Director Luba Kolomytseva
Deputy Managing Editors
Fred Schwarz / Kevin D. Williamson
Associate Editor Robert VerBruggen
Research Director John J. Virtes
Research Manager Dorothy McCartney
Executive Secretary Frances Bronson
Assistant to the Editor Katherine Connell
Contributing Editors
Robert H. Bork / John Derbyshire
Ross Douthat / Rod Dreher / David Frum
Roman Genn / Jim Geraghty / Jonah Goldberg
Florence King / Lawrence Kudlow / Mark R. Levin
Yuval Levin / Rob Long / Jim Manzi
Andrew C. McCarthy / Kate O'Beirne
David B. Rivkin Jr.

NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE
Editor Kathryn Jean Lopez
Managing Editor Edward John Craig
Deputy Managing Editor Duncan Currie
Associate Editor Emily Karrs
Staff Reporters David Freddoso
Mark Hemingway / Stephen Spruiell
Webmaster James Voris
Technical Services Russell Jenkins

CHAIRMAN & CEO
Thomas L. Rhodes

EDITORS-AT-LARGE
Linda Bridges / John O'Sullivan

Contributors
Hadley Arkes / Baloo / Tom Bethell
James Bowman / Priscilla L. Buckley
Eliot A. Cohen / Brian Crozier
Dinesh D'Souza / M. Stanton Evans
Chester E. Finn Jr. / Neal B. Freeman
James Gardner / David Gelernter
George Gilder / Jeffrey Hart / Kevin A. Hassett
Charles R. Kesler / John Kiley
James Jackson Kilpatrick / David Klinghoffer
Anthony Lejeune / D. Keith Mano
Michael Novak / Alan Reynolds
William A. Rusher / Tracy Lee Simmons
Terry Teachout / Taki Theodoracopulos
Vin Weber

Assistant to the Chairman Barbara Nowack
Chief Financial Officer James X. Kilbridge
Accounting Manager Galina Veygman
Accountant Zofia Baraniak
Treasurer Rose Flynn DeMaio
Business Services
Alex Batey / Amy Tyler
Circulation Director Erik Zenhausern
Circulation Manager Jason Ng
WORLD WIDE WEB www.nationalreview.com
MAIN NUMBER 212-679-7330
SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES 386-246-0118
WASHINGTON OFFICE 202-543-9226
ADVERTISING SALES 212-679-7330
Executive Publisher Scott F. Budd
Advertising Director Jim Fowler
Advertising Manager Kevin Longstreet
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER Paul Olivett
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER Martin P. McNulty

PUBLISHER
Jack Fowler

FOUNDER
William F. Buckley Jr.

Letters

Less Knife, More Invisible Hand

I was struck by this quote from Gov. Mitch Daniels, as reported by Mark Hemingway in your June 8 issue ("Mitch the Knife"): "The plant will employ a process called 'coal gasification' to exploit the state's coal reserves more efficiently, creating jobs and lowering utility bills."

It should not be government's role to intervene in the market for the sole purpose of creating jobs. If utilities find that this new process will save them money, they will make the investment on their own. I certainly hope that the taxpayers of Indiana are not paying their utilities a subsidy to invest in a clean-coal technology that will cost more than the savings from using locally mined coal.

Governors need to be less involved in such details, not more involved, as Mr. Hemingway's essay implies. This is just another subtle demand for better philosopher-kings to rule us. The free market needs no such ruler, no matter how brilliant he is, or pundits think he is. The sole role of government is to protect our life, liberty, and property. I think I read that somewhere—oh, yes, the Declaration of Independence.

Patrick Barron
West Chester, Pa.

Wise Latin Man

Your laudable attempt to appease those who obsess over inclusive language is, alas, less than successful. In "The Week" (June 8), you offer, in a touching display of empathy, a Latin grace for meals in secular colleges: *Benedictus benedicat.* You translate this invocation as "may the Blessed One bless"—indicating that Blessed One is blessedly free of disturbing references to gender.

It pains me to point out that the *-us* ending of *benedictus* identifies it as a masculine form of a Latin adjective belonging to the first and second declension—the feminine form would be *benedicta*. It would appear that no matter how earnest our efforts are to purge language of a pervasive male bias, we keep falling short. With *benedictus*, not only do we fail to neuter the word "One," what's worse, we make it linguistically clear that the One whose blessing we seek is incontrovertibly masculine. This is not the kind of thing to throw in the faces of those we don't want to get mad.

Joseph Moscinski
Hillsborough, N.J.

Correction

In "Hinge of History" (May 25), by Ronald Radosh, it was asserted that the Crooms, a couple in Lionel Trilling's novel *The Middle of the Journey*, were based on Alger and Priscilla Hiss. In fact, Trilling later denied this, asserting that he had not known the Hisses until after the book's publication. The article also wrongly located Trilling's birthplace as London; it was New York City.

Letters may be submitted by e-mail to letters@nationalreview.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

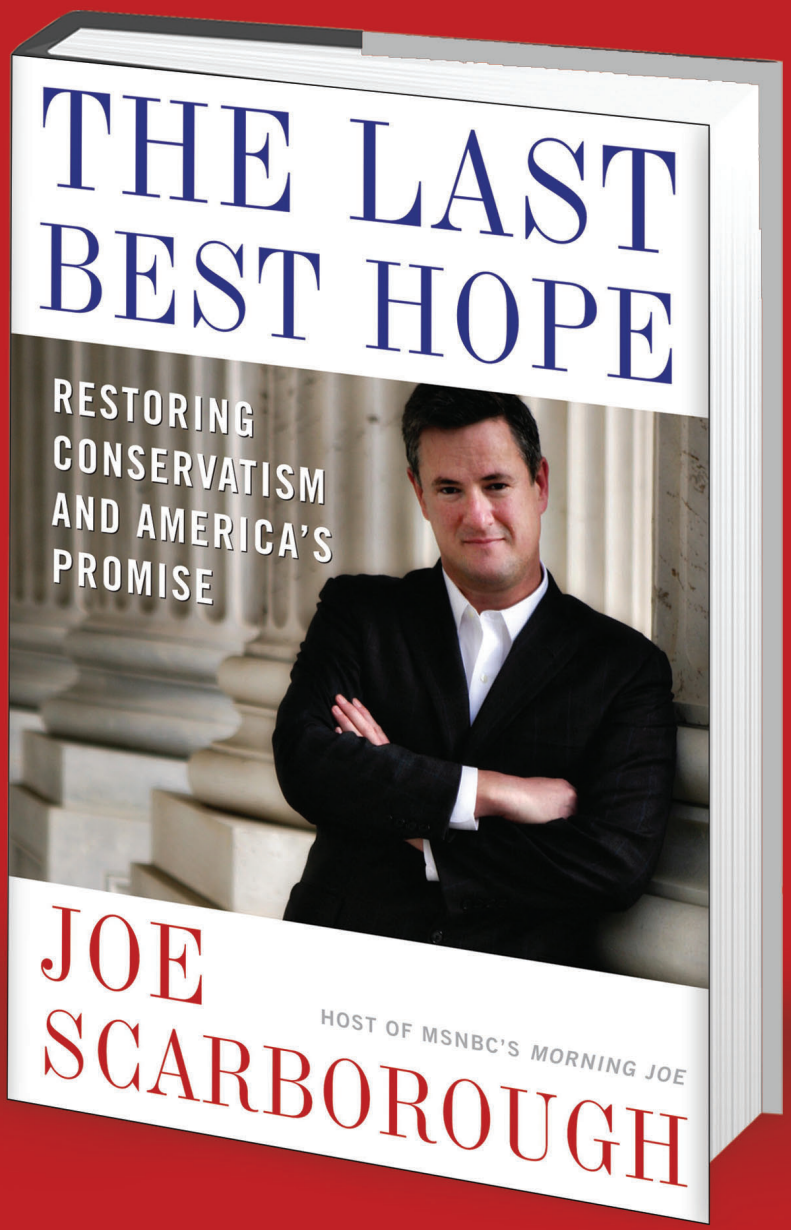
"Conservatives need to read this book. Joe Scarborough is a real conservative."
—JED BABBIN, *Human Events*

The Last Best Hope draws on the forgotten genius of conservatism to offer a road map for the movement and the country. Delivering a searing indictment of the political leaders who have led us astray, Scarborough inspires conservatives to reclaim their heritage by drawing upon the strength of the movement's rich history.

"Scarborough undertakes a critical mission: the reinvigoration of conservatism in America. Aiming to take conservatives beyond reaction and beyond sentimentality, he asks the big questions, and does not shy away from offering answers. This is an important contribution to one of the most vital debates of the day."
—JON MEACHAM

"Joe Scarborough can save the GOP. This is a lively, likeable and important book. So my fellow Republicans—rejoice. We have a face! Now let's get to work."
—CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

"*The Last Best Hope* is must reading for anyone who cares about the conservative movement."
—PEGGY NOONAN



CROWN FORUM

JoeScarborough.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

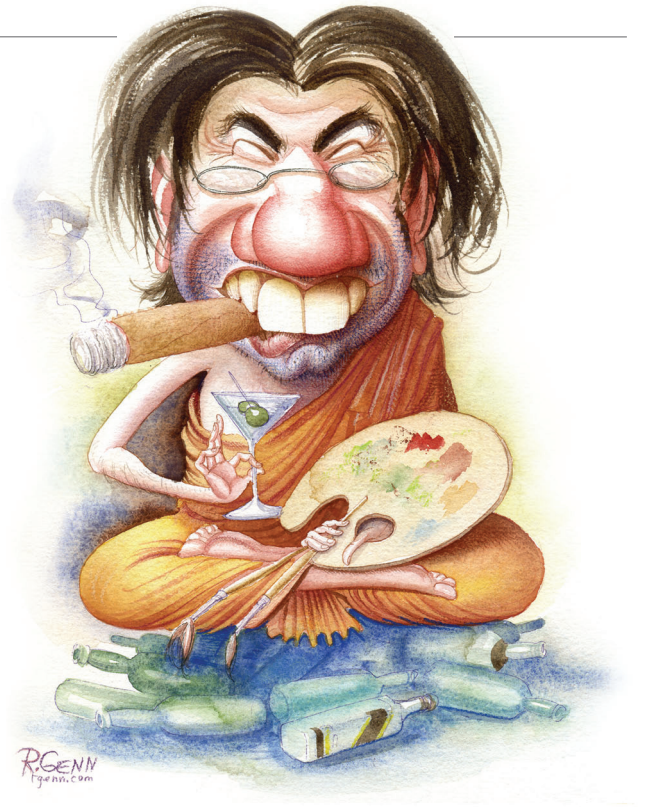
The Week

■ Asked whether he was in touch with a prominent former member of his flock, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright said no: "Them Jews ain't going to let him talk to me." But them Jews needn't worry: Obama never hears him anyway, right?

■ James von Brunn, an 88-year-old white supremacist and anti-Semite, walked into the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., with a .22 rifle and killed Stephen Johns, a security guard. Other guards shot and wounded von Brunn before he could commit more mayhem. Sixty-four years after history's most wicked anti-Semite shot himself, his soulmates still walk the earth. For many years, the locus of American Jew-bashing was, loosely speaking, on the right (e.g., various incarnations of the Klan). Beginning with the Yom Kippur War, it has moved left, stimulated at first by the propaganda of the Soviet Union (which could not tolerate the humiliation of its Arab clients), though long surviving it. The last thing to do now, however, is play a game of gotcha. Hatred has to be fought at every turn, rancor foresworn by all. The federal government does well to monitor groups and individuals like von Brunn, who we hope will spend the rest of his life in jail.

■ Two soldiers, Pvt. William Long and Pvt. Quinton Ezeagwula, were shot outside a Little Rock recruiting center; Long died. The man who attacked them was Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad (né Carlos Bledsoe), a convert to Islam who was being watched by the FBI after a trip to Yemen. Not watched hard enough, obviously. The domestic jihad has attracted would-be terrorists (the Newburgh four), freelance killers (the Beltway snipers), and penumbral nut jobs (the anthrax mailer). It has foreign well-wishers who want to fan it into insurrection. They are far from succeeding and will surely fail, but this, *anno domini* 2009, is the main domestic threat we face. N.B.: Private Ezeagwula is recovering, and hopes to become a drill sergeant. "I like defending this country," he said. Carry on, soldier.

■ Judge Sonia Sotomayor's remark about the special qualities of a "wise Latina woman" was no outlier. Sifting her record shows the trope of "wise woman" or "wise Latina woman" running through her speeches for 15 years. She sees group-think in the texture of American institutions: "There are cultural biases built into testing," she said in a discussion in the early Nineties. She sees it in the law: A memo she signed in 1981 declared that "capital punishment is associated with evident racism in our society." She offers herself as a counteracting hand on the scales: "When [Hispanic] litigants see people like myself on the bench," the system acquires "more of a sense of fairness." She holds these views, even though they can be condescending to favored groups: During the New Haven firefighters case (*Ricci* v. *DeStefano*) she said that no job test can be acceptable if it "is going to always put a certain group at the bottom of the pass rate." Always? Even if they work as hard as Sonia Sotomayor has all her life? Judge Sotomayor's opinions, for the most part, show the cautious and consensual quality of appeals-court rulings. But she seems uncomfortable with one of the basic qualities of judging: impartiality. That is why judges wear robes, concealing their forms—a woman's garment for men, a priestly garment for women. We get personality from legislators and executives. Justice is blind.



Our offensive artist

ROMAN GENN

■ It took only a few hours for the "Wise Latina" cover of our last issue to be roundly denounced as offensive by lefty bloggers (about a week later, Frank Rich caught up and denounced it too) for reasons they couldn't quite settle on. Was it that we couldn't compute the idea of a wise Latina and therefore had to render her as Buddha? Or had we unacceptably stereotyped Asians? It was the most confused attack on an NR cover since an image of Chuck Schumer dressed for the Inquisition was branded simultaneously anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic. Critics focused on artist Roman Genn's rendering of Sotomayor's eyes. As a caricaturist, of course, Roman exaggerates his subject's natural features, and Sotomayor has squinty eyes, especially when she smiles. One cringes at having to explain such things, but so it goes when dealing with people who are willfully dense and humorless.

■ David Letterman welcomed Sarah Palin on a visit to New York City by musing on her daughter's man trouble: Alex Rodriguez had "knocked [her] up" during a Yankees game, and Eliot Spitzer was after her too. The daughter that Sarah Palin was traveling with was 14-year-old Willow, which made Letterman's lines creepy as well as gross. He apologized twice, with increasing vehemence, if not conviction: first, saying he meant to mock 18-year-old Bristol; then,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Time travel at the speed of a 1935 Speedster?

The 1930s brought unprecedented innovation in machine-age technology and materials. Industrial designers from the auto industry translated the principles of aerodynamics and streamlining into everyday objects like radios and toasters. It was also a decade when an unequaled variety of watch cases and movements came into being. In lieu of hands to tell time, one such complication, called a jumping mechanism, utilized numerals on a disc viewed through a window. With its striking resemblance to the dashboard gauges and radio dials of the decade, the jump hour watch was indeed "in tune" with the times!

The Stauer *1930s Dashtronic* deftly blends the modern functionality of a 21-jewel automatic movement and 3-ATM water resistance with the distinctive, retro look of a jumping display (not an actual jumping complication). The stainless steel 1 1/2" case is complemented with a black alligator-embossed leather band. The band is 9 1/2" long and will fit a 7–8 1/2" wrist.

True to Machine Art esthetics, the sleek brushed stainless steel case is clear on the back, allowing a peek at the inner workings.

Try the Stauer *1930s Dashtronic* Watch for 30 days and if you are not receiving compliments, please return the watch for a full refund of the purchase price. If you have an appreciation for classic design with precision accuracy, the *1930s Dashtronic* Watch is built for you. This watch is a limited edition, so please act quickly. Our last two limited edition watches are totally sold out!

Not Available in Stores

Stauer 1930s Dashtronic Watch
$99 +S&H ***or*** **3 easy credit card payments of $33** +S&H

Call now to take advantage of this limited offer.

1-800-859-1602

Promotional Code DRW275-02
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer
Heritage of Art & Science

14101 Southcross Drive W.,
Dept. DRW275-02
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.stauer.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

claiming he had not known that any daughter had been with Palin. It was a ratings stunt tawdry even by the standards of late night, and some liberal arbiters—Howard Kurtz, NOW—called him on it. Palin rapped Letterman too, but then she kept on rapping. She charged him with encouraging the "use and abuse" of minors, and with being a "Hollywood/NY entertainer" out of touch with "the rest of America"; she said she was the victim of a double standard (the Obama girls are not mocked). Some of this is true, some of this is fustian. But if you take an opponent too seriously, you become his peer. Sarah Palin should be taking on the president of the United States, or the president of Iran, not aging TV not-so-comics.

■ Leon Panetta, the CIA director, had something to say about Dick Cheney's criticisms of Obama national-security policies. In fact, Panetta made a shocking charge: "It's almost, a little bit, gallows politics. When you read behind it, it's almost as if he's wishing that this country would be attacked again, in order to make his point. I think that's dangerous politics." The Obama administration later interpreted away the plain meaning of Panetta's words. Panetta's dangerous politics should have no place at the CIA.

■ In 2007, Sen. Arlen Specter supported legislation to get rid of the secret ballot in elections to unionize companies—legislation at the top of the labor movement's agenda. Facing a Republican primary challenge, he came out against it. Now he is a Democrat, and he has just announced that labor will be "satisfied" with his final vote. Our advice to the union leaders: Schedule the vote before his primary.

■ Eamon Javers reports in *Politico* that President Obama refers in public to Jesus Christ more often than Bush ever did. We don't object. Neither do most of the people who objected when Bush did it. Their excuse for the double standard is that Obama is not trying to impose his faith on others, as Bush supposedly did by opposing same-sex marriage and abortion. (Obama says he opposes same-sex marriage too, but he gets a pass from liberals who know he is lying.) The planted assumption is that Bush's positions have no rational basis. It turns out that most of the fulmination about American theocracy that we heard over the last decade reflected nothing more than policy disagreements.

■ In their primary for governor, Virginia Democrats rejected a left-wing crusader (Brian Moran) and a Clinton crony who parachuted into the state (Terry McAuliffe) in favor of the candidate endorsed by the *Washington Post*: Creigh Deeds. The result thus said two good things, and one bad thing, about Virginia Democrats. The general-election match-up is geographically interesting: Deeds

Say It!

A couple of years ago, at the dawn of my young daughter's awareness of such concepts as guile and duplicity, she drew on the wall of her mother's home office. It was a bunch of swirls with a ballpoint pen, and might have gotten an NEA grant in the early 1990s. Anyway, when confronted, our precious angel, an only child, insisted that it must have been a "bad girl" who'd come in and done it. Now, as nearly all parents are aware, the greater sin is in not admitting the crime. And we spent quite a while trying to elicit a confession from her, albeit in a *Sesame Street* Torquemada kind of way. "Just admit it and we won't be angry," was a frequent refrain.

For years, I've been saying that what bothers me about liberal media bias isn't the bias as such; I've made peace with its existence just as I've made peace with the inevitability of paper cuts and bowel-stewing intestinal parasites. You have to balance the need to live your life with the desire to minimize your exposure to life's inevitable hassles. Sometimes you just have to read the *New York Times*, and sometimes you just have to eat that chimichanga at the Newark Airport food court. In both cases you hope your stomach can take it.

No, what bugs me about liberal media bias is the refusal of its practitioners to admit that they are biased. It is an insult to dissemble about something so self-evident, and a sign of disrespect. Back in my bachelor days I used the analogy of the friend who swears he didn't drink your last beer. You don't care about the beer, but you can't stand his not admitting it. The longer he goes on refusing to 'fess up, the more you turn into Sam Kinison on a coke bender. "You took my beer! Say it!! Say it!!!"

And that's how I'm feeling these days. To say that the press is in the tank for President Obama is to say something so incandescently obvious that you almost feel a fool for letting the words pass your lips. Yet to make this point, to offer this sky-is-blue, 2+2=4, cats-don't-make-great-draft-animals remark, invites eye-rolling or—worse—passive-aggressive calumny from the same liberals who honestly believe the "corporate media" were in the tank for George W. Bush. Stop laughing.

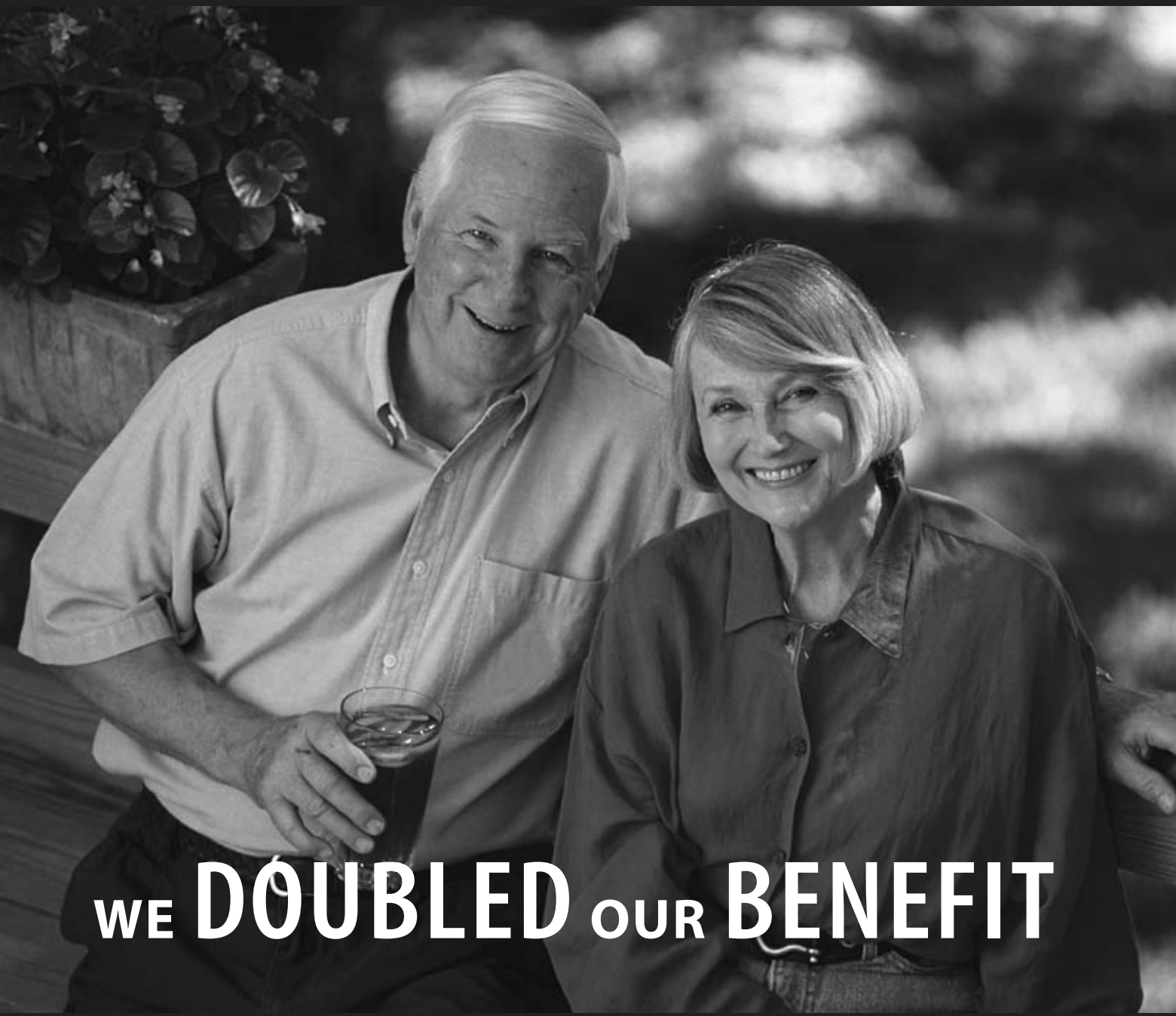
Roman catamites showed only slightly more deference to Caesar than *Newsweek* shows to Obama. As of this writing, ABC News is orchestrating a socialized-medicine infomercial to be filmed from the White House. The president is doing pitch-work for MSNBC like an Oval Office Don Pardo.

And that's fine. If we are to be like Europe with partisan media, so be it. All I ask is that the partisans admit it. Just say it. Say it!

—JONAH GOLDBERG

KEVIN WINTER/TIME & LIFE PICTURES/GETTY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



WE DOUBLED OUR BENEFIT

With Half the Hassle!

Our tax advisor suggested we could maximize our tax savings by donating appreciated stock, instead of cash, to our favorite charities and that we could reduce the work involved by making just one transfer of stock to a DonorsTrust donor-advised fund.

By donating the stock to DonorsTrust, we received our charitable tax deduction, avoided the capital gain on our appreciated stock, and now have time to consider which nonprofit organizations we want to support.

And, DonorsTrust provides a protective boundary that gives us confidence that our charitable investments will never be used to fund any group that goes against the American ideals of limited government, personal responsibility, and free enterprise.

We made a gift to charity and struck a blow for limited government!

Smart giving.
Convenient giving.
Principled giving.

For more details, visit our Web site or call us for a free informational brochure.

DonorsTrust
BUILDING A LEGACY OF LIBERTY

703.535.3563 | www.donorstrust.org

DT Philanthropic Services, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is from a rural background, while the Republican candidate, Bob McDonnell, is thought to appeal to the suburbs of northern Virginia. Deeds will try to make "rural" mean moderate, although his record on taxes is liberal and his record on everything else is becoming more so. Deeds is also trying to link McDonnell to President Bush, which does not suggest great respect for the intelligence of the commonwealth's voters. Republicans have an excellent shot at picking up this governorship—and demonstrating that Virginia is not ready to become deep blue.

■ In 2008 Democrats won control of the New York state senate, 32 seats to 30, for the first time since the Sixties. It lasted only six months, however, until two Democrats, Pedro Espada Jr. (Bronx) and Hiram Monserrate (Queens), agreed to vote with the GOP. Espada, who is guilty of numerous campaign derelictions and who seems not even to live in his district, was rewarded with the office of senate president. Monserrate, who has been indicted for slashing his lover's face with a broken glass, had no public reward, which may be why he announced the following week that he was switching back to supporting his own party, thus creating a 31–31 tie. No one listens to Gov. David Paterson, who succeeded to the office from the lieutenant governorship when the elected governor, Eliot Spitzer, was caught patronizing prostitutes. The budget is billions of dollars in the red, and the population will slip below Florida's any day now. Why would anyone want to run this place?

■ Rick Duncan campaigned for anti-war Democrats in Colorado last year: Hal Bidlack, who lost a race for the fifth congressional district; and Rep. Jared Polis (second district) and Sen. Mark Udall, who won. He was a perfect advocate: a gay Marine captain with three tours of duty in Iraq, wounded by an IED in Fallujah, suing Halliburton for exposing troops to toxic smoke, leader of the Colorado Veterans Alliance. It turns out, however, that Duncan is a perfect fraud: In fact he is Rick Strandlof, a mentally ill drifter and petty criminal who never served in the military. His lies unraveled when he told one too many—asserting that he actually worked for Udall—and a colleague at the Veterans Alliance began to check him out. Case closed. Strandlof, like all con men, was the product not only of his own deceptions, but of his dupes' desires.

■ As part of an effort to sell the American public on the stimulus package, Obama, then the president-elect, commissioned his economic advisers to do a study demonstrating how many jobs would be "created or saved" by his proposal. The study included a graph purporting to show that without the stimulus the unemployment rate would climb to 9 percent by 2010, whereas with the stimulus it would level off at 8 percent before declining rapidly. Unemployment currently stands at 9.4 percent. On the bright side, Tallahassee, Fla., will soon be getting a $3.4 million "eco-passage" to ensure that turtles can cross safely under a busy roadway. Perhaps the administration can commission a study showing us the number of turtles the stimulus has created or saved.

■ A handful of large banks are repaying, with interest, the money they received under the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), prompting some to wonder whether the taxpayer might make money on the deal after all. Don't bet on it. It is important to remember that former Treasury secretary Henry Paulson forced a number of healthy banks to participate in TARP as an insurance policy. With markets in a panicky state, Paulson decided to spread the money around to avoid labeling some banks as problem children. Now we know who the problem children are. AIG, Citigroup, Bank of America, and others still have hundreds of billions of bailout dollars and no exit strategy to speak of. It is good to see healthy banks returning public money they didn't need in the first place, but we won't be popping the champagne corks and celebrating a profit for the taxpayer any time soon.

■ The price that U.S. Treasury bonds command on the market plunged in recent weeks, meaning that lenders are demanding higher returns in order to loan Washington money with which to finance the sundry mischief Washington does. The "yield curve"—i.e., bond investors' profit, which naturally moves in the opposite direction of bonds' prices—is rising and steepening. There are two interpretations of this. The first is that panicked stock-market investors who fled to the relative safety of Treasury bonds are once more sallying out in search of higher returns. The other interpretation is that the relative safety of Treasury bonds is being called into question. Even though inflation is at present almost nonexistent in the U.S. economy, bond traders have seen trillions of dollars pulled like trillions of rabbits out of the Fed's magic hat to fund bailouts and stimulus, and they recognize this as a probable precursor to inflation, perhaps serious inflation. Even the reliably asleep-at-the-wheel credit-ratings agencies are taking note: Moody's has warned that U.S. public finances are being overburdened, and SR Rating, a Brazil-based firm, plans to downgrade U.S. bonds from AAA to AA. That's no cause for panic, but it is a cause for concern, and the markets evidently are feeling it.

■ Like an old-fashioned burlesque performer, Timothy Geithner reveals, bit by bit, the administration's plans for policing Wall Street. We have the familiar feeling that we like some of what we see but are not sure it's worth the ticket price. On the asset side of the balance sheet are a number of sensible policy updates, some of which this magazine has supported. Most significant is establishing a single regulatory authority with FDIC-style powers to seize and force into resolution insolvent financial firms whose failure would present a systemic risk to the economy. On the liability side are such measures as encumbering derivatives with new regulations and requiring that firms issuing or brokering securitizations remain substantially invested in the instruments that pass through their hands, an idea that is likely to cause as many problems as it solves. (Imagine if your local stockbroker had to hold each stock he sold.) Geithner strikes a delicate balance, touting his ideas to the American public and also to foreign parties heavily invested in the American economy, notably Chinese holders of American government debt. Speaking at Peking University, Geithner declared that "Chinese assets are very safe" in America, and the audience laughed in his face—albeit nervously. Geithner dances, but we're all exposed.

ROBERT TRIPPETT/RAPPORT SYNDICATION

■ Let's implement pay-as-you-go budgeting (PAYGO), Obama recently said, to keep the deficit from getting bigger. Forget that Obama's timing is awfully convenient, coming after he already

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Historical Landmark in Bible Publishing!

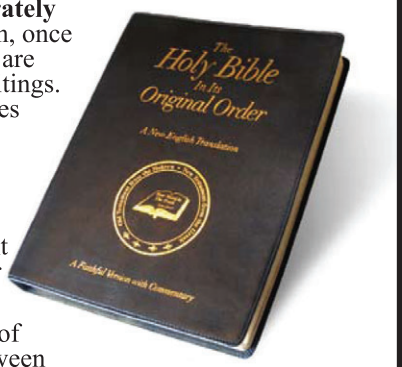
"A great balance to the excesses of higher biblical criticism" – *REV! Magazine*

"The Holy Bible In Its Original Order"

"Excellent Translation... Must Have!" –*International Society of Bible Collectors*

Why *This* Bible is Unique Above All Other Bibles . . .

The Holy Bible In Its Original Order is an extraordinary Bible—unique in two ways. **First**, it is the **only *complete* Bible ever published—with both Old and New Testaments—that accurately follows the original canonical manuscript order** as recognized by most scholars. In addition, once the original order of the 49 biblical books has been restored, the Seven Divisions of the Bible are also re-established. *The Old Testament* contains: 1) The Law, 2) The Prophets, and 3) The Writings. *The New Testament* contains: 4) The Gospels and Acts, 5) The General Epistles, 6) The Epistles of Paul, and 7) The Book of Revelation. With this restoration. God's purposeful design of the Scriptures begins to unfold, revealing His divine inspiration.

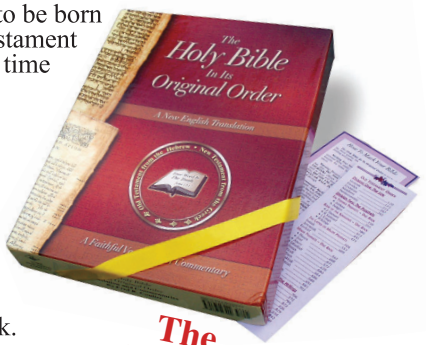


Includes over 250 pages of commentaries and appendices, including history of how we got the Bible!

It is a widely unknown *fact* that the original manuscript order of both the Old and New Testament books was *altered* by early church fathers. *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order* includes commentaries that trace precisely how the Bible erroneously came to be in its present 66-book format—revealing how and why its books were mysteriously repositioned from their original order by fourth-century "editors."

Second, this version is a new translation—*A Faithful Version*—that reflects the true meaning of the original Hebrew and Greek with fidelity and accuracy, showing the unity of Scripture between the Old and New Testaments. Today, in the face of rampant religious confusion, those who read and study the English Bible deserve a quality translation that can be trusted. Reviewer Dan Decker of *Bible Editions and Versions* (June 2005) writes of this Faithful Version of the New Testament: "**It** [is] **an excellent translation for those desiring a literal one.**" Likewise, the Old Testament rendition faithfully conveys the clear meaning of the Hebrew text.

Included are vital **Commentaries** providing accurate accounts of the history, canonization and preservation of the books of the Bible: Who wrote them? When were they written? When were they canonized and by whom? Other **Commentaries** and **Appendices** answer critical questions such as: When was Jesus born? How did Jesus Christ fulfill the Law and the Prophets? When was Jesus crucified? How long was He in the tomb? When was He resurrected? What does it mean to be born again? What are works of law? What are the true teachings of the early apostolic New Testament Church that Jesus founded? Also, **biblical and historical chronologies** show an accurate time line from the creation of Adam and Eve to the present. There are **detailed footnotes** and **marginal references** explaining hard-to-understand passages of Scripture.



The Perfect Gift!

With 1410 pages, *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order* is only 1-3/8 inches thick—and measures 8-1/4 by 10-1/2 inches. The **genuine handcrafted *lambskin cover*** features **gold stamped lettering**. The paper is **high-quality** French Bible paper with gold gilded edges. The pages are easy to turn and do not stick together. The Bible also features **wide margins** for note-taking, and a **center column** with selected **references, word definitions** and **alternate renderings** for various key words. It comes in a highly durable **presentation box**, beautifully adorned with *original* artwork.

Other Features: Triple bound for extra long life (Smythe stitched, spine stitched and glued)
• beautiful original artwork of the Temple in Jesus' time • 14 commentary chapters 25 appendices
• six chronologies various maps

NEW! FREE Special Gift
32-page Commentary & Supplement:
"Understanding the Difficult Words of the Apostle Paul"

FREE Deluxe Presentation Case!
The Bible in its Original Order **also comes with deluxe, custom, durable presentation box with handy lift-out ribbon, two double laminated book markers and a lifetime quality guarantee.**

Save $50...
Special Offer for *National Review* Readers!

The Holy Bible In Its Original Order will retail in bookstores for $149.95, but *National Review* readers can own this exceptionally high-quality Bible for the special low price of $99.50 (+ $9 for S/H).

To order call **1-800-852-8346** or mail coupon to
Century One Books
111 South Orange Grove Blvd., Suite 300-NR
Pasadena, CA 91105

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
No. Ordered _____@ $99.50 + $9 each for S/H Total $_____
Check/Money Order enclosed ☐ Please bill my credit card:
☐ MC ☐ VISA ☐ AMEX ☐ DISC
CC# _____ Exp. ____ / ____
Signature _____ Sec Code _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shepherded his $800 billion stimulus bill through Congress. Forget also that PAYGO does not apply to discretionary spending, automatic increases in entitlement spending, or the few tax cuts (Bush's cuts for the lower income brackets) that Obama wants to keep. The key thing to remember is that it is easier for the majority in Congress to ignore PAYGO rules than it is for an alcoholic to ignore a promise to himself. The Democrats made a big deal about bringing back PAYGO in 2006, and proceeded to suspend it twelve times over the next two years. It will be interesting to see whether they break that record.

■ The details remain unclear as we go to press, but President Obama's firing of Corporation for National and Community Service chairman Gerald Walpin does not smell good. This year, Walpin investigated claims that St. HOPE Academy, a non-profit founded by Sacramento mayor Kevin Johnson, was misusing AmeriCorps money. The organization's leaders soon confessed, and Johnson (an Obama supporter) was suspended from receiving federal grants. Under a settlement agreement that Walpin opposed, the suspension was lifted, and St. HOPE agreed to pay taxpayers back about half of what was misused. Walpin received word of his termination June 10, and soon thereafter told Byron York of the *Washington Examiner* that he suspected the investigation, the ensuing controversy, and another investigation (which found that AmeriCorps funds were misused at City University of New York) had led to his firing. So far the administration has offered no alternative explanation.

■ Congress passed a measure to regulate cigarettes, and the legislation was filtered through the business interests of tobacco giant Philip Morris. The new bill gives the world's largest cigarette manufacturer an opportunity to play the do-gooder in public while leaving its competitors gasping for air. As the owner of the market's most recognized cigarette brands, Philip Morris benefits from restrictions on cigarette advertising that will hinder rivals seeking to expand their market share. Flavored cigarettes are banned with the emphysematous exception of menthols—and guess which firm finds itself increasingly reliant upon menthols for sales in the United States? Menthols are heavily favored by black smokers and, in a show of wheezy solidarity, the Congressional Black Caucus joined Philip Morris in supporting the menthol exemption. President Obama, who inhales Marlboros and exhales nothing but sunshine, will no doubt celebrate the bill as a great advance for public health, but there is a reason Big Tobacco's alpha dog has 19 different lobbying firms on retainer and has, as we learn from the *Examiner*'s Tim Carney, just added the regulation-happy Sen. Max Baucus's former chief of staff to its roster of influence merchants. Safe to say this bill did not pass entirely on its Merits.

■ The editors of the *Washington Post* are spluttering because a bill to give D.C. residents a voting representative in the House has stalled. Republicans sponsored an amendment to protect D.C. citizens' gun rights, and it passed with the support of many Democrats, including Harry Reid. The *Post* says the amendment is a ruse by Republicans who are "too gutless or feckless to oppose [the bill] directly." But most of them do oppose it directly and openly, because it is plainly unconstitutional. The bill is stalled because of liberal Democrats, who must worry that the amendment is contaminating their handiwork with its flagrant constitutionality.

■ House Democrats, indebted to the Code Pink wing of their party, have pressed for the publication of photographs documenting the abuse of prisoners by military personnel. The release of the photos to the general public would do nothing to reform military practice or punish the guilty, but it would provide an arsenal of propaganda weapons to enemies of the United States. Appreciating that we cannot afford to give this gift to al-Qaeda, Sen. Joe Lieberman and a few of his more sober Democratic colleagues have resisted the photos' release, and the Obama administration has indicated that it will support their position. But the upper hand still belongs to Nancy Pelosi, who seeks to stoke the rage to which she owes her speakership. President Obama could declare the photos classified and put this sorry business to an end with a pen stroke, but at this writing has shown no stomach for doing so.

■ The Obama Justice Department is giving captured terrorists in Afghanistan *Miranda* warnings. The resulting hue and cry is understandable, given that President Obama, like Candidate Obama, took umbrage at any suggestion that he regarded terrorists as mere criminals who should be read their rights. But the policy of reciting *Miranda* warnings to captured terrorists overseas started with President Clinton, who decided to treat the 1998 embassy bombings as a crime rather than an act of war. The practice waned under President Bush, because *Miranda* is meant to validate confessions for trial, and Bush regarded jihadists as wartime enemies, not criminal defendants. The problem with Obama's approach is not a matter of *Miranda* warnings as such, but the turning of the clock back to the failed law-enforcement strategy of the Nineties. The ability to prevent terrorist attacks hinges on acquiring intelligence. If terrorists are told that they have a right not to speak to us, and provided with taxpayer-funded lawyers who will advise them to clam up, we will not get intelligence. Our investigations will be models of due process—and the price for this will be paid in dead Americans.

■ Pushback from Congress and a disgruntled public forced the Obama administration to reverse course on resettling 17 Gitmo detainees—Uighurs from Chinese Turkestan who received terrorist instruction in jihadist camps—in the United States. The administration has instead bribed Palau and Bermuda to take them. This move provoked such outcry in the former that Palau's president is waffling on the deal; in the latter, it put the government of Premier Ewart Brown in jeopardy, the scandal exacerbated by the Obama administration's failure to consult with Britain, which is responsible for Bermuda's foreign policy. Meantime, the Justice Department announced that detainee Ahmed Zuhair has been transferred, free and clear, to his native Saudi Arabia. Zuhair was complicit in the murder of an American U.N. worker, was convicted in absentia in Bosnia for a 1997 car bombing, and may have been involved in the 2000 USS *Cole* attack, which killed 17 American sailors. This mess was necessitated by President Obama's reckless insistence on shuttering Guantanamo Bay, a model facility, even as released detainees are known to be returning to the jihad at an alarming rate. Obama already has broken campaign promises aplenty—why not disappoint al-Qaeda, too?

■ One little-noticed line in his much-dissected Cairo speech was President Obama's complaint that American "rules on charitable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

HOME LIGHTING *Breakthrough*

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room.

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp brings many of the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that's perfect for a variety of indoor activities.

You don't need the sun to get the natural benefits of daylight
• See with clarity and enjoyment
• Creates natural, glare-free light
• Provides sharp visibility
• Flexible gooseneck design
• Instant-on, flicker-free light
• Pays for itself in energy savings over the life of the bulb
Height as shown: 50"

Ever since the first humans built a fire in their dark cave, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. But ever since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has, unfortunately, remained relatively prehistoric.

Modern light fixtures do little to overcome problems associated with improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness, and burning. As more and more of us spend longer and longer hours in front of our computer monitor, these problems are compounded. And the effects of improper indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to a physical problem: the quantity and quality of light can also play a part in both our mood and work performance.

Studies show that sunshine can both lift your mood and enhance your energy levels. But as we all know, the sun does not always shine. Now, however, there's a solution to the problem– The **Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp** will change not only the way you see, but also the way you feel about your living and work spaces. It brings the benefits of natural daylight indoors, simulating the full spectrum of daylight.

The **Balanced Spectrum's** 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent of a 100-watt ordinary light bulb. With the lamp's sharp visibility, you will see with more clarity and enjoyment in close tasks such as reading, writing, sewing, and needlepoint. It is especially helpful for aging eyes.

Experience sunshine indoors at the touch of a switch. This amazing lamp is not only easy on the eyes, it is easy on the hands as well, featuring a special "soft-touch, flicker-free" rocker switch that is easier to use than traditional toggle or twist switches. And its flexible gooseneck design enables you to get light exactly where you need it. The high-tech electronics, the user-friendly design, and a bulb that lasts 10 times longer than an ordinary bulb–all these features make the **Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp** a must-have.

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp for the best value ever! Now more than ever is the time to add sunshine to every room in your home at this fantastic low price! The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with *first*STREET's exclusive guarantee. Try this lamp for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

This light can change the way you live and work

It provides excellent lighting which is very close to true daylight. The lamp itself is light enough to be moved easily around a room and an office. The glare-free characteristics provide a very non-stressful illumination for prolonged reading.
–Stanley G., M.D.

As soon as I turned on the lamp and began to read the newspaper I could see the wonderful difference. This lamp is just what I needed. Thank you so much.
–Donna E.

Your lamp has been a wonderful help to me in reading my newspaper and magazines. I would hate to be without this lamp, it's made such a difference in my life.
–Kenneth K.

Dozens of testimonials on file.
Results not typical.

Technology revolutionizes the light bulb
- *Save almost $61 over the life of the bulb*
- *8,000 hours bulb life*
- *Energy efficient*
- *Shows true colors*

Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp
Item# BB-3589 . . . . . **was ~~$59.95~~**

Call now for $10 instant savings!

Only $49.95 each + S&H

*Order two Balanced Spectrum® floor lamps and get **FREE shipping** on both lamps.

*Free shipping within the contiguous 48 states only.

Please mention promotional code 38647.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day.

1-888-649-6834

We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone. To order by mail, please call for details.

www.balancedspectrum.com

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

All rights reserved. © 2007 TechnoBrands®, Inc.

41472

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

giving have made it harder for Muslims to fulfill . . . *zakat*," the alms-giving obligation that is central to Islam, as to other religions. Obama pledged to undo this seeming injustice. But the United States has no rules that discriminate against Islamic giving. Our laws, instead, forbid material support for terrorism. They have been applied against various entities, not just Islamic ones, that abet terrorist organizations. They have fallen most heavily on Muslim charities because, as has been proven repeatedly, jihadist groups use some of those charities as fronts for terrorism financing. Indeed, during the recent Holy Land Foundation trial, which resulted in the convictions of several Hamas fundraisers, the government presented evidence of a broad Islamist conspiracy to conduct "financial jihad." Material-support laws enable the government to deprive terror cells of the resources they need to operate. They are a key part of the strategy that has kept America free of major terrorist attacks since 9/11. Some Muslims may consider facilitating murder an act of charity; U.S. law rightly takes a different view.

■ Most observers were expecting that Hezbollah would win the general election in Lebanon. Financed and armed by Iran, Hezbollah already does as it pleases, and seemed ready and willing finally to take over the state. Such an outcome would have meant victory for the Shiites Hezbollah claims to represent (and, beyond that, Iran) and a defeat for the governing coalition of Sunnis, Druze, and Christians (and beyond that, the West). However improbably, Gen. Michel Aoun, a warlord and a Christian, has thrown in his lot with Hezbollah. On the day of the vote, the Aoun party made little or no difference. In a parliament of 128 seats the governing coalition increased its majority by one, to 71, while Hezbollah correspondingly lost one, coming in at 57. Hezbollah has accepted that the election has not increased its strength, and meanwhile it maintains its militia, the most effective force in the country, and also its dubious and contested power to veto legislation it dislikes. Even without a parliamentary majority, that is a stranglehold that at some time or other will have to be resolved if Lebanon is ever to enjoy peace.

■ The Obama administration has been pounding on the Israelis, demanding an end even to the "natural growth" of settlements in the West Bank. In the strictest interpretation, that means the population of each settlement would have to stay static—if someone has a baby, someone else has to move out. This is an unreasonable and unworkable scheme. If there ever is a peace deal, Israel will have to give up those settlements that are not essentially suburbs of Jerusalem. In the meantime, the settlements aren't a first- or even second-order driver of the Arab–Israeli conflict. The Obama administration is wasting its breath on a distraction.

Reminder to Subscribers

■ Several agencies are soliciting your NATIONAL REVIEW subscription renewal without our authorization. Please reply only to NATIONAL REVIEW renewal notices with a return address in Mount Morris, Ill., and ignore all requests for renewal that are not directly payable to NATIONAL REVIEW, as these may be fraudulent. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

■ The United Nations has expanded sanctions against North Korea, with Resolution 1874. Compared with previous resolutions, this one is aggressive. It cracks down on Pyongyang's funding sources and calls for heightened inspections of North Korean cargo. The Obama administration has said it will interdict North Korean ships if necessary. North Korea, meanwhile, continues to provoke; most recently it sentenced two American journalists, Euna Lee and Laura Ling, to twelve years in a labor camp. It's unclear to what degree the world's powers intend to enforce the new sanctions, but Pyongyang's May 25 nuclear test seems to have persuaded them that the Bush administration's deal with North Korea—like Bill Clinton's earlier appeasement—elicited nothing but bad behavior.

■ In the news now is another big Cuba spy case. A married couple, Kendall and Gwendolyn Myers, spied for Castro for a full 30 years. They were members of our diplomatic elite; Kendall worked at the State Department. And they spied for love, we are told—ideological love—not money. They even got to schmooze with Fidel (like so many Hollywood actors). Let us be clear about what they did: They aided a regime that denies people their fundamental rights; that imprisons people for dissent; that tortures them while they are in prison; that kills people who try to flee the island; that will allow no political pluralism; that squashes the very souls of people, like any other totalitarian state. People say that this Myers couple betrayed their country, and that is so. But they also betrayed what we stand for.

■ The Asian experience with sex-selective abortion—the destruction of fetal daughters to accommodate future sons—typifies the instrumentalization of human life. In the United States, communities of Indian, Chinese, and Korean origin, coveting sons, are producing lopsidedly male generations. In China, there are 120 boys born for every 100 girls; while the Asian-American demography is not as extreme, the deviation is measurable and statistically significant—about 8 extra boys per 100 births among some Chinese-Americans studied—exceeding the expectations of researchers, who pronounced themselves "blown away" by the findings. Sperm-sorting and other sex-selection methods are employed, but abortion remains the common means of preventing the existence of unwanted girls. And not only girls: About 90 percent of unborn children with Down syndrome are aborted in America, a much higher rate of elimination than for those diagnosed in utero with a terminal case of femininity. What will come to pass if genes are found that suggest a homosexual orientation, for instance, or a merely average intellectual endowment, or eyes that are less than perfectly periwinkle blue? The reduction of human life to the status of consumer product is the Caliban of the abortion culture, and this thing of darkness they must acknowledge theirs.

■ In an English county-council election in the Cambridgeshire district of St. Ives, the Labour party finished fourth, behind the Tories, the Liberal Democrats, and, in third place, Lord Toby Jug, representing the Official Monster Raving Loony party. The OMRLP, which makes some eminently sensible policy proposals ("All socks to be sold in packs of 3 as a precaution against losing one"; "The European Constitution . . . will be sorted out by going for a long walk, as 'everyone knows that walking is good for the constitution'"), was founded in 1961 by Screaming Lord Sutch, an enthusiastic pop singer of no discernible talent who nonethe-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

less had a long and lucrative career. As a politician he was much less successful, losing 39 straight elections. Lord Toby Jug has continued that tradition. Finishing ahead of a real party may, however, encourage the loonies.

■ Public lotteries are in effect a tax on the poor and innumerate, and so not to be approved of in the generality. They do produce some cheering news stories, though. The latest concerns 23-year-old Neal Wanless of Todd County, S.D.—the nation's seventh-poorest county. Neal lives with his parents on their 320-acre ranch near the town of Mission, raising cattle and sheep but making very little money. The family is behind in property taxes and their main trailer home was repossessed last year. Now their financial troubles are over: Neal won a $232 million Powerball jackpot. News pictures of Neal show a shy, handsome young man in cowboy gear. Neighbors speak of the family as honest and hard-working. It is heartening to see fortune smile on these good people, and to know that rural America survives somehow in this age of lawyers, accountants, and bureaucrats. But since Neal is now surely the nation's most eligible bachelor, he might want to hire a secretary to deal with his mail.

■ Nothing new under the sun? That does not apply in chemistry, where every few years there is an addition to the periodic table of elements. Element number 111 was officially recognized by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry in 2003 and named "roentgenium" in 2004. Now the IUPAC has acknowledged element 112, four atoms of which were synthesized at various times between 1996 and 2004. Hypothetical elements have provisional dog-Latin names, in this case "ununbium," but now that number 112 officially exists, a formal naming can take place. The IUPAC is accepting suggestions. In keeping with this historical moment, might we suggest "obamanium"?

■ Harvard senior Chanequa Campbell was barred from graduating after police linked her to a drug-related murder on campus. So naturally she went on a media tour. "Harvard is doing this to me because I'm black, I'm poor, and I'm from Brooklyn," she explained. Much of the coverage has focused on Harvard's refusal to discuss Campbell's case publicly. If it did, perhaps it would have occasion to mention that in 2005 it let her off the hook for forging a check to herself—and that poor black girls from rough neighborhoods are just the sort of student it especially prizes.

■ We record with sadness the passing of Omar Bongo, president of the West African republic of Gabon since December 1967. Bongo was the longest-ruling of the world's national leaders by continuous title, hereditary monarchs excluded. (This distinction now passes to Moammar Qaddafi of Libya, in power since September 1969.) In spite of standing only 4'11" in his stockinged feet, Bongo was one of the original African "big man" rulers, skillfully—though with much help from France, the former colonial power—maintaining control of his country's affairs while diligently shoveling the national revenues into private bank accounts held by himself and his family. Any American inclined to bestow a cynical sneer on Bongo's 42 years in office might pause to reflect that some of our own legislators easily surpass him in political longevity. Robert Byrd has been in the U.S. Senate over 50 years, John Dingell in the House more than 53 years. The presidents-for-life of banana republics must look with envy on them.

IRAN

Farce and Tragedy

MANY Iranians are now displaying the courage of despair, in the knowledge that they have been deceived and cheated. They were promised an election for president, and what they got was a farce. The election's practical importance was modest. Not the independent official that his title seems to describe, the president is responsible for putting into practice the policies of the "supreme leader," and as such he is hardly more than a public dogsbody. Yet the incumbent, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is a fanatic who has alienated huge sections of the population, and Iranians hoped that this election would at least provide some sort of test of public opinion.

No such luck. Under the disguise of clerical robes and turbans, the Islamic Republic is a classic example of thugocracy, and the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, did his best to suppress any chance for the people to register dissent. All candidates needed his approval to run, and in the end he limited Ahmadinejad's challengers to three elderly members of the Islamic establishment, who would presumably act out a pretend election without making a serious effort to win. Yet one of the three, Mir-Hossein Mousavi, quite unexpectedly turned out to be willing and able to criticize Ahmadinejad, and he emerged as a figurehead for opposition, even though his past is very far from immaculate.

SIPA/AP

President Obama was excited by what he described as "a robust debate" during the campaign, though this soon enough proved to have no content. Authorities suppressed opposition publications and websites and barred foreign observers from monitoring the elections. Voters knew that their ballots were not secret and that they could be punished for backing the wrong man. On top of this, vote "counters" laid in large stocks of blank ballots. Then an implausibly quick announcement of victory, with suspiciously similar voting statistics from province to province and group to group, made clear that Ahmadinejad's official margin of 63 percent to 34 percent over Mousavi was a crude fabrication.

The sequel has been both inspiring and horrifying, as hundreds of thousands of protesters have turned out across Iran—and paid for it with arrests, beatings, and even their lives. How far the repression will go is unforeseeable, but the regime's misguided manipulation and recourse to violence is a lasting stain. The supreme leader and his president have little choice except to pretend to strength, yet Ahmadinejad's taunting and chest-beating amid all the bloodshed seem only to further inspirit his brave opponents.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Obama admittedly has no easy task in dealing with this crisis, but what he has done so far amounts mostly to unhelpful temporizing. The main impression he gives is that he wants the dictatorship to stabilize itself so he can get back to the work of appeasing it. He seemed to support an electoral review process that is certain to be as fictitious as the original vote count; and while he pronounced himself "deeply troubled" by the violence and gave the protesters tepid support ("What I can say is that there appears to be a sense on the part of people who were so hopeful and so engaged and so committed to democracy who now feel betrayed," he thundered at one point), he also he went far out of his way to say, in effect, that he will negotiate with Ahmadinejad no matter what happens.

To be sure, the president is right to be cautious about butting into a situation over which he has little influence, and to avoid raising Iranians' hopes for assistance that he cannot deliver. Yet he could sound a little less eager to rush to the bargaining table with Ahmadinejad. The more Obama extends that hand of his, the likelier a newly emboldened regime will be to try to crush its bones. He might try being a bit more standoffish to the mullahs, to let the protesters know that he regards them as more than an inconvenience. They are putting their safety, their homes and jobs, and even their lives on the line to oppose a vicious dictatorship, and everyone who cares about freedom in Iran, peace in the Middle East, and security throughout the world must hope they somehow succeed.

AT WAR

Buttering Parsnips

A U.S. president addressing the world is in a situation very different from that of a religious leader interpreting a doctrine or a philosopher clarifying an argument. He is principally concerned not with the truth of his propositions but with their likely effects. That does not mean he can tell outright lies—they would be detected and he discredited—but it does suggest that he should stress some truths more than others and soften the harsher ones. And he will be right to do so if the effect is to reconcile civilizations and religions at risk of conflict with each other.

That is the standard by which to judge President Obama's Cairo speech. As a matter of history and analysis, it was a mess. It was not a warm and fuzzy multicultural moment when John Adams forswore hostility to Islam back in the late 18th century—the president was simply trying to get the Barbary states to stop raiding American shipping. There is no comparison between U.S. support for a coup in Iran in the 1950s and the current Iranian regime's 30-year rampage of terror. Nor should the Holocaust and Palestinian suffering under Israeli occupation be mentioned in the same passage. And on and on.

As public diplomacy, however, the speech hit the mark.

A myth of Christian, Western, and American hostility toward Islam has grown up. It materially assists (though not as materially as rich Saudi Wahhabists) the wrong side in the Islamic civil war between the overlapping, diverse, and largely tolerant camps of traditional Islam and the narrow, puritan, militant sects of Salafist Islam. And if there was one theme uniting the president's laundry list of a speech, it was the necessity to assist the former by removing any grounds for anti-Americanism that might strengthen the latter.

Obama was helped by his biography, of course; the fact that he had a Muslim father plainly made him more attractive to his listeners, who gave him a standing ovation. On this occasion he apologized less and boasted more about America than in other overseas performances. He linked his personal story ("not so unique") to the promise of opportunity that America holds out for all, including American Muslims, who enjoy higher-than-average incomes and education. Finally, he warned Muslims not to accept crude stereotypes of America.

What this will get us, it is impossible to say. But it was extraordinary for a U.S. president to give a rapturously received speech in the heart of the Arab world that called for democracy, women's rights, and an end to the excuse-making by which Arabs blame Israel for all their problems. Obama could have done worse—and, during the Iran crisis, already has.

HEALTH CARE

A Fiasco in the Making

In 1994, President Clinton's health-care proposal was done in by its complexity and rigidity. It is the insubstantiality of President Obama's plan that threatens to do it in. Its features are vague and up for grabs, and nobody knows how to make its numbers add up. The American Medical Association does not want a new government insurance program open to all comers and capable of undercutting private insurers. Some Democrats are leery of paying for an expansion of benefits by taxing private health insurance. Obama is having trouble explaining how taking on new commitments will reduce federal spending. He is relying on hundreds of billions of dollars of unlikely cuts in Medicare and Medicaid to balance the books, and still has a large financing gap. The Congressional Budget Office, controlled by Democrats, is reporting that the leading Democratic health-care bill would cost $1 trillion over ten years while reducing the uninsured percentage of the population by less than a third.

Republicans have to some extent been bystanders to Democratic squabbling. They are rightly siding with the AMA against the "public option." If implemented, it would cause tens of millions of people to lose their private coverage; it would also be enormously expensive. They should likewise reject Democratic attempts to tax private insurance. It is true that many conservatives, including John McCain last year, have proposed transforming the tax break for health insurance—making it apply equally to employer-provided and individually purchased coverage. The leading Democratic proposals simply raise taxes and use the proceeds to fund government-run insurance programs. Obama relentlessly and dishonestly attacked McCain for seeking to raise taxes on the middle class. When Republicans turn Obama's words against him, they will be speaking the truth.

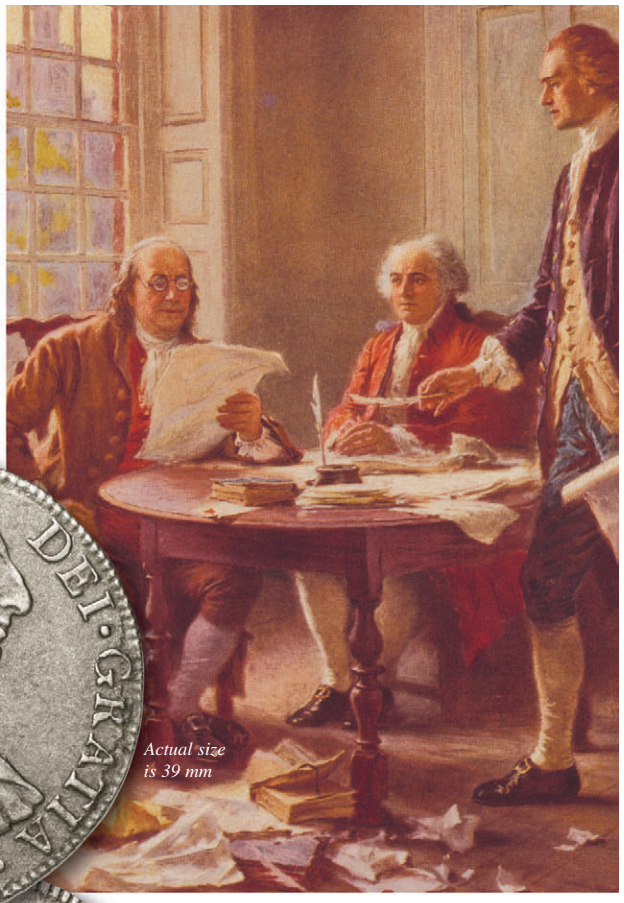
Republicans should not have only harsh words for Obama's ideas. If he truly believes that he can squeeze hundreds of billions of dollars from federal health programs, then he should be encouraged to do so. But the savings should be banked before they are spent.

The administration's course would achieve negligible gains in Americans' health while costing vast sums. Reforming federal policies so as to expand the individual insurance market would, on the other hand, cost almost nothing to taxpayers while increasing coverage rates. Republicans should expose the flaws of Obama's approach, and stand ready for the time when the public wants a second opinion.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American Revolution Silver Dollars FOUND!

Authentic coins from 1783 – the year we won our independence!



Actual size is 39 mm

A fishing expedition off the southern coast of the U.S. recently netted a cache of American silver dollars lost at the bottom of the sea for over 200 years—and upon closer examination it was discovered that many of these coins are dated 1783—*the year we won our freedom!*

The Silver Dollar of our Founding Fathers.
George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin could have carried these same coins in their pockets at the time our country was born. Jefferson recommended the Continental Congress adopt this silver dollar as the country's FIRST silver dollar. Congress agreed. The rest is history. And now that they are available to the American public, the coin of our founding fathers is *tangible history you can secure for your very own.*

Now, through this discovery, you can own a set of TWO of these historic treasures — at a truly affordable price! Authentic items from the time of the Revolutionary War are seldom found or can be seen only in museums. Over the last 225 years most colonial American silver dollars have been lost or melted down for their precious silver. Containing a hefty 27 grams of 90.3% silver these coins were real money back then—and real money today. They currently sell elsewhere for as high as $295 each. But because of this historic discovery and our exclusive negotiations, for a limited time, you can own not just one of these coins of our Founding Fathers, but a set of TWO 1783 Silver Dollars—for our Guaranteed best price of only $149! That's less than $75 for each Silver Dollar! Both coins were hand selected for their detail, one featuring a visible date on its front, and the other the Spanish Coat of Arms on its reverse.

And both are beautifully mounted in a special full color protective display. This is American history you and your family can own and give as gifts to your children and grandchildren—gifts they are certain to treasure and lovingly pass down for generations!

Act Fast to Avoid Disappointment!
Our supplies of these incredible historical artifacts of the American Revolution are rapidly disappearing. We URGE you to call NOW to avoid the "Sold-Out" notice.

1783 Silver Dollar 2-coin Set $149*
SAVE $126 Off what they've sold for elsewhere!

Buy More to Save More!
THREE 1783 Silver Dollar Sets $**139 Each*** ***SAVE $30!***
FIVE 1783 Silver Dollar Sets **$135 Each*** ***SAVE $70!***

Buy with confidence! Each 1783 Silver Dollar Set comes with a Certificate of Authenticity and a 30 Day Satisfaction Guarantee and is housed in a colorful display holder.

TOLL-FREE 24 HOURS A DAY
1-800-456-2466
Offer Code SRS125
Please mention this code when you call.

GOVMINT.COM
YOUR ONE BEST SOURCE FOR COINS WORLDWIDE
14101 Southcross Drive W., Dept. SRS125
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.GovMint.com

BBB® *Accredited Member Since 1985*

Plus shipping & handling. Note: GovMint.com is a private distributor of worldwide government coin issues and is not affiliated with the United States Government. Prices and availability subject to change without notice.* **©GovMint.com, 2009

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Green Flags and Brown Shirts

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's 'reelection' reveals a deep and restive Iranian opposition

BY DAVID PRYCE-JONES

THE rigging of an election requires a subtle mix of expertise and effrontery, and Iran has just shown what it can do in that respect. The regime is truly a master of deception, and way ahead of everyone else when it comes to adopting the air of injured innocence in response to reproach. Reelected, like every previous president of the Islamic Republic since 1981, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is due to be in office for another four years. At press conferences characteristic of the man, he has been taking the line that all this talk about rigging is a conspiracy on the part of Western media and other "oppressors" (now who would they be?); meanwhile he will be preparing for the return of the Hidden Imam, and of course getting on with the business dearest to him: completing the country's nuclear program and destroying Israel.

The regime's structure of power has been designed to create and maintain a totalitarian state. Iran is in the hands of a one-man ruler: Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, designated the "supreme leader." His will is absolute, and the president is merely the official responsible for putting into practice his policies and decisions. Somewhat disguised under clerical robes and turbans, this is an Islamic version of precedents such as Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union—not so powerful, of course, but equally assertive that whatever means it adopts are justified by ideological ends. Law and order is therefore a matter for the state's special units, the Revolutionary Guards and the paramilitary *basij*, comparable to the Gestapo and the Soviet KGB.

Ayatollah Khamenei evidently believed that the maneuver for electing the president could be carried out as usual to give him the preordained result. Khamenei may even believe that he is popular, respected, and infallible. So an election with the superficial air of a contest was arranged. As many as 475 candidates put their names forward (42 of them women, naturally all rejected), only to be whittled down to Ahmadinejad and three senior members of the establishment, each with impeccable Islamic credentials. On the day President Obama delivered his speech in Cairo calling for a new beginning in the relations of the United States and the Muslim world, Khamenei took the opportunity to say that the main criterion of change would be the attitude of the United States toward Israel, which he chose to describe as "the cancerous growth in the heart of the Middle East."

Khamenei and Ahmadinejad were evidently confident of coasting to victory on all fronts. When Obama then said of the coming election, "Whoever ends up winning, the fact that there has been a robust debate hopefully will advance our ability to engage them in new ways," he can only have reassured them further.

Yet an election, even in controlled circumstances, can have unforeseen twists and turns, and this one was such a case. One of the three selected elders, Mir-Hossein Mousavi, is a former prime minister. Held responsible for ordering the killing of Iraqi prisoners during the war with Saddam Hussein, he is no sort of liberal. Quite unexpectedly, he turned out to be able and willing to criticize Ahmadinejad and, by implication, the power structure. It was a striking novelty that his wife, Zahra Rahnavard, campaigned for him with humor and as much feminism as circumstances allowed. Probably not much more than 10 or 15 percent of the 43 million voters support the supreme leader and Ahmadinejad. About as many Iranians resolutely oppose them, and Mousavi found himself their spokesman. Suddenly two blocs had formed, one consisting of people without the education to question what Ahmadinejad was telling them and the other a vehicle for those who understand that the regime's domestic policy is incompetent and oppressive, and that its foreign policy is placing their lives in danger. The level of distress and anger thrust

ROMAN GENN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the role of reformer onto Mousavi, perhaps to his surprise.

Amnesty International is only one among several authoritative sources to report that Iran has "a backdrop of discrimination, worsening repression of dissent and violent unrest. . . . The country has witnessed the arbitrary arrest and harassment of activists and members of minority communities, censorship, armed attacks and suicide bombings." One such minority community is the Baluchis, who, as Sunnis, consider themselves persecuted by the Shiite majority. Recently a Baluchi group, the People's Resistance Movement of Iran, launched a suicide-bomb attack on a mosque in Zahedan, the provincial capital of Sistan-Baluchestan, killing as many as 25 and wounding dozens more. Less than 48 hours later, three men were captured and "confessed" to the deed, whereupon they were instantly hanged in public near the site of the attack. This led to more unrest, with ten people killed and dozens arrested.

In May, a woman by the name of Delara Darabi was hanged. She was 22. Some years previously, while still a minor, she and her boyfriend supposedly murdered a cousin of her father's and stole some jewelry. In prison, Delara Darabi became known nationally as a poet and painter. Before executing her, the prison governor telephoned her mother to gloat that there was nothing she could do and nobody to appeal to. The boyfriend was sentenced to ten years in prison. This case caused widespread outrage. Very few countries now have the death penalty for juveniles, but, again according to Amnesty, there are at least 135 minors on death row in Iran.

The list of injustices is long and lengthening. Mobilizing the many people with assorted grievances and fears, Mousavi became the head of a so-called "green movement"—green for Islam rather than environmentalism—analogous to the "velvet" and "orange" revolutions that have democratized what was Soviet Europe. The political chief of the Revolutionary Guards lost no time warning that he would crush any revolution against the Islamic system on the part of Mousavi's green movement. In an analogy with how protest once evolved in the Soviet Union, "Islamism with a Human Face" began to appear a possibility.

A totalitarian regime can be overthrown by war, as Hitler's Germany was. In the case of Iran, this option is almost unimaginable, though the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 evidently alarmed the supreme leader enough to cause him to suspend the nuclear program temporarily. A more realistic alternative is collapse from within, as happened in the Soviet Union. Elections were the cause of it. Mikhail Gorbachev took it for granted that the party's control was so absolute that Boris Yeltsin could be allowed to run against it. But as soon as Yeltsin was in a position to criticize the party and offer an alternative, Gorbachev's precautions proved useless, and power drained away from him. Finally, the decision not to repress Yeltsin led with irresistible political logic to the downfall of the Soviet Union and everything it had stood for.

The supreme leader and his apparatchik Ahmadinejad took precautions. Ahmadinejad accused Mousavi of Hitler-style smears and falsification, and of having Zionist links. The Iranian ballot is not secret; voters can be identified and punished if need be. Huge numbers of blank ballot papers were available to the authorities, while websites, suspect publications, and communications systems were closed down. Foreign monitors were forbidden. When the votes were counted, Ahmadinejad was found to have about 63 percent, with a majority in every sector—ethnic minorities, women, students, and so on. Mousavi received about 33 percent; although he is an Azeri, he was declared to have been outvoted in his own Azeri-dominated province, confirming the zeal of those who arranged Ahmadinejad's landslide. What happened, Mousavi rightly said, was a "dangerous charade." He may have to pay, with his freedom or perhaps his life, for opening the way to "Islamism with a Human Face."

Thousands of Mousavi supporters have taken to the streets, setting fire to tires and trash. This is fury at the level witnessed when the shah was overthrown 30 years ago and the Islamic Republic was installed in his place. The *basij* have been operating, as usual, in pairs, one driving a motorcycle and the other on the pillion seat swinging a baton, while plainclothes secret policemen assault demonstrators and drag them off under arrest. So a country governed according to Islamic principles, which supposedly are peaceful by definition, proves to be a police state like any other.

The supreme leader and Ahmadinejad are caught in the dilemma that confronted Gorbachev and confronts all totalitarian rulers who have to deal with anyone demanding change, obliged to pick their between a hard line and concessions. They have declared electoral victory but are widely disbelieved and discredited for it. They have banned Mousavi supporters from demonstrating, but thousands are defying authority and gathering on successive days in central Tehran. The two rival blocs created by the election are facing off. Will the *basij* remain loyal? Already a handful of people have been killed on the streets. If given the order, would they or the Revolutionary Guards open fire on the demonstrators on a Tiananman Square scale? Is it conceivable to rerun the election openly and honestly? And, in the event of a different outcome, what would be the response of the supreme leader?

At the very least, this election has revealed that Iranians are divided, and that a substantial number implacably oppose the Islamist ideology imposed upon them. That is great good news for the world in general, and a particular piece of undeserved luck for President Obama. What he imagined to be a robust debate in fact concealed genuine opposition: Even if the mullahs succeed in their crackdown and continue the nuclear program as before, they plainly do not have a united Iran behind them. **NR**

A totalitarian regime can be overthrown by war, as Hitler's Germany was. In the case of Iran, this option is almost unimaginable. A more realistic alternative is collapse from within, as happened in the Soviet Union.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Blame Not the Deregulator

It was market distortions that created the bubble

BY STEPHEN SPRUIELL

LAST month, Paul Krugman launched a campaign to pin the financial crisis on "Reagan and his circle of advisers." It was "Reagan-era deregulation," Krugman wrote, that led us to the "mess we're in." The substance of Krugman's screed was so tissue-thin that even ultra-liberal columnist Robert Scheer responded to it with bafflement: "How could Paul Krugman, winner of the Nobel Prize in economics and author of generally excellent columns in the *New York Times*, get it so wrong?" So let's not credit Krugman with making a serious argument, rather than throwing a partisan grenade.

Paul Krugman: mythmaker

The broader narrative into which Krugman's column fits, however, must be addressed. Left-wingers and Democratic partisans are united in a vigorous effort to blame deregulation for the financial crisis. Scheer, for example, agreed that deregulation set the meltdown in motion; he disagreed with Krugman only on who, specifically, was to blame. In Scheer's less partisan version of the narrative, Bill Clinton and his advisers are the "obvious villains" for having backed various deregulatory acts during the 1990s. (Of course, Republicans are hardly absent from this version of the story: Former senator Phil Gramm is portrayed as the architect of the late-Nineties deregulation that allegedly brought down the banking system.)

The argument that a lack of regulation caused the crisis is seductive in its simplicity; it completely ignores the other side of the government equation. Regulation is seldom necessary unless the discipline of a truly free market is absent—such as when the government indemnifies companies or industries against failure, or when it juices markets with generous subsidies. In the case of the housing bubble, both of these distortions were present. Wall Street titans, led by government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, juiced like Jose Canseco until they grew "too big to fail." In retrospect, it looks like a failure to regulate; in fact, regulations wouldn't have been necessary if the government hadn't provided the steroids.

Krugman argued that the 1982 Garn–St. Germain Depository Institutions Act sowed the seeds for the 2008 financial crisis—and that, because President Reagan signed it, the blame for 2008 lies on his doorstep. Never mind that Garn–St. Germain passed by veto-proof margins in both chambers; that it was co-sponsored by prominent Democrats, including Steny Hoyer and Charles Schumer; and that it was the second of two bills that deregulated the savings-and-loan industry, its predecessor—the Depository Institutions Deregulation and Monetary Control Act of 1980—having been signed by President Carter.

The line supposedly connecting Garn–St. Germain to the mortgage meltdown is itself more crooked than Lombard Street; it exists, finally, only in Krugman's imagination. For while Garn–St. Germain did pave the way for the kinds of adjustable-rate and interest-only mortgages that Wall Street gorged on during the housing boom, this result was not inevitable: Scheer points out that "as long as the banks that made those loans expected to have to carry them for 30 years, they did the due diligence needed to qualify creditworthy applicants."

What happened, according to Scheer and other subscribers to the less partisan version of the blame-deregulation narrative, is that a series of deregulatory moves in the late 1990s and early 2000s enabled the market for mortgage-backed securities and other derivatives to grow huge while disregarding risk. The 1999 Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act allowed depository institutions to acquire investment-banking and insurance arms. The 2000 Commodity Futures Modernization Act (CFMA) allowed derivatives (such as credit-default swaps) to be traded over the counter, with little regulatory oversight. And a 2004 rule change at the Securities and Exchange Commission allowed investment banks to operate with debt-to-equity ratios of over 30 to 1.

These policy changes certainly contributed to the *size* of the crisis, which is why the blame-deregulation narrative seems plausible at first. It is true that without Gramm-Leach-Bliley, Citigroup could not have grown as large as it did. But there is no evidence that Citi's size or diversity of business lines had anything to do with its overinvestment in mortgage-backed assets. Financial institutions that did not diversify made the same mistake, and they arguably fared worse during the crisis. Bear Stearns, the first investment bank to collapse under the weight of its bad assets, did not have a commercial-banking arm. Furthermore, without Gramm-Leach-Bliley, commercial bank J. P. Morgan could not have mitigated the consequences of Bear's collapse by acquiring it. (On the other hand, the Federal Reserve's facilitation of the sale of Bear created the hazardous expectation that every failed firm would get a bailout.)

As for the CFMA, Kevin D. Williamson and I have written in these pages that institutions buying credit-default

PAUL J. RICHARDS/AFP

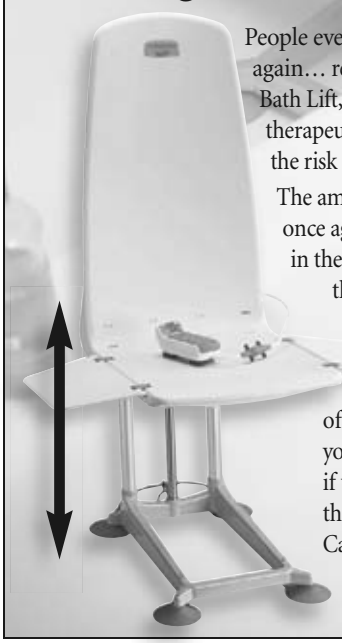
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Enjoy your bath again with peace of mind

The secret to this amazing product is the powerful mini-motor and actuator that enables it to lift up to 330 pounds using a state-of-the-art rechargeable NiCad battery.

Bath Lift gently lowers you down and raises you back up from 3" to 17"

Are you missing the pleasure of refreshing, relaxing baths? Well, grab your towel!



People everywhere are taking charge of their lives and taking baths again… regardless of age or mobility issues. Thanks to the Archimedes Bath Lift, these people are once again enjoying the simple pleasure and therapeutic benefits of taking a bath. Best of all, they can do it without the risk of slipping and falling.

The amazing Archimedes Bath Lift makes bathtub luxury possible once again. You just slide over onto the "chair," wiggle your toes in the warm, comforting water, and gently lower yourself into the tub, controlling your descent to the level at which you're most comfortable.

So, put those baby wipes and sponge baths behind you and return to the bliss of luxuriating in the kind of bath you've always enjoyed. Ask our Bath Lift experts how you can try this innovative product in your own home, and if you are not completely satisfied return the product during the trial period for a refund of the product purchase price. Call today!

Mangar

Senior™ Approved

firstSTREET exclusive
not available in stores

Archimedes Bath Lift

Item # ZR-4880

Call now to get a $30 Mail-in Rebate and FREE Shipping.

This is a special limited-time offer. Call today!

29"- 43"H x 23"L x 16"W. *330 lb weight capacity.*

Please mention promotional code 38648.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day

1-888-588-2717

We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone. To order by mail, please call for details.

www.bathliftdirect.com

*first*STREET® for Boomers and Beyond®

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

All rights reserved. © 2007 TechnoBrands®, Inc.

48835

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

insurance should be required to have a real insurable interest at stake. As it stands, an institution can buy insurance on a bond it doesn't even own. That said, losses on credit-default swaps have been smaller than expected, because so many transactions are "netted"—institutions buy credit protection and then sell it at a higher price, so their exposure is hedged. When Lehman Brothers declared bankruptcy, institutions that sold credit protection on Lehman bonds were projected to lose as much as $400 billion. After all the transactions cleared, though, sellers had lost only $6 billion on their Lehman trades. AIG's portfolio of credit-default swaps presented a bigger problem, as the mortgage-backed assets they insured started to sour.

But, contra Scheer, deregulation was not the primary or even secondary reason that mortgage lending spun out of control. Government promotion of homeownership set the table for a massive run-up in real-estate borrowing, and the Federal Reserve's loose monetary policy in the early 2000s rang the dinner bell. Add to these factors Wall Street's ability to skirt rules and influence regulators, and it is far from clear whether any amount of regulation could have quelled investors' appetite for seemingly safe mortgage debt.

By now, the case against the GSEs is well rehearsed, but it's worth restating in this context because it provides such a vivid illustration of why regulation is needed when market discipline is absent. Fannie and Freddie's role as government-chartered companies with public missions gave investors the (correct) impression that Uncle Sam would never let them fail. Thus the GSEs enjoyed borrowing costs only slightly higher than those of the federal government, and they used this subsidy to expand rapidly, doubling the amount of mortgage debt on their books every five years since 1970. (When they finally collapsed last year, they owned or guaranteed over $5 trillion in debt.)

For years, it was *conservatives* who argued that Fannie and Freddie had grown dangerously large and needed stronger oversight. The GSEs' old regulator, the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, had neither the experience nor the authority to rein them in. Democrats and Republicans alike ignored these warnings, though President Bush and the Republicans made a failed effort to reform the GSEs after a series of accounting scandals at the companies in 2003–04. (The bill died when Democratic senator Chris Dodd threatened to filibuster it.) But both parties were complicit in giving the GSEs "affordable housing" goals to meet. In 1995, the Clinton administration lifted restrictions on the kinds of mortgages the GSEs could purchase to meet these targets; Bush increased the affordable-housing goals during his presidency.

As Peter J. Wallison and Charles W. Calomiris pointed out in a study for the American Enterprise Institute last fall, this enabled Fannie and Freddie to purchase or secure more than $1 trillion in subprime and Alt-A loans between 2005 and 2007 alone. Unlike the deregulatory acts that Scheer and others are blaming, this contributed directly to the inflation of the housing bubble. Wallison and Calomiris wrote: "Without [the GSEs'] commitment to purchase the AAA tranches" of the bulk of the subprime mortgage-backed securities issued between 2005 and 2007, "it is unlikely that the pools could have been formed and marketed around the world."

To be sure, the investment banks were more than happy to buy up the rest of the toxic debt, but one reason these banks took on too much leverage was their confidence that, in the event of a downturn, the Fed would cut interest rates—and keep them low—to stimulate the economy. They called this "the Greenspan put" after former Fed chairman Alan Greenspan (a "put" is a financial option purchased as protection against asset-price declines). The Fed had cut interest rates to stimulate growth after the tech bubble burst, and it had cut them to historically low levels after the 9/11 attacks. From late 2001 to late 2004, the Fed held interest rates under 2 percent, making investors desperate for a decent rate of return. Mortgage-backed securities met that need. Harvard professor Niall Ferguson recently contended in the *New York Times Magazine* that "negative real interest rates at this time were arguably the single most important cause of the property bubble."

The Left continues to propagate the myth that a zeal for deregulation did us in, because it prefers government interference in the marketplace. That's why it's important to remember that, for the current economic disaster, government interference bears much of the blame. NR

Europe's Disintegrating Left

Analyzing the recent elections

BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN

EXACTLY 20 years after the velvet revolutions of 1989, the shape of post–Cold War European politics finally began to assume clear form in the election results for the European Assembly (alias, the European Parliament). For this to happen, much that was familiar had to be swept away. Domestic political structures that reflected the Cold War—for instance, the dominance of an Italian Christian Democratic party that was a shambles economically and socially but a firm anti-Soviet bulwark in foreign and defense policy—had to decay and disappear. New social forces, such as the ethnic loyalties previously held in check by the overriding need for anti-Communist unity, had to coalesce into political organizations. Myths had to be disproved—for instance, the New Labour fiction that the Left could administer free markets both more compassionately and more efficiently than the capitalist Right. These things needed time and a period of flux to evolve. They have emerged in the European election results.

For once, conventional wisdom on European elections limped halfway to sensible conclusions. *The Economist* summed them up: "The center-left failed to capitalize on an economic crisis tailor-made for critics of the free market. Support for mainstream center-right parties held steady or fell slightly. Incumbents were not uniformly punished, but those caught in scandals involving power, privileges, and perks were. And a chunky protest vote went to populist and far-right outfits vowing to close borders, expel immigrants, or dismantle the European Union." This is a pastel version of a picture painted in primary colors by the voters. It has been given a light overwash with *The Economist*'s breezy, liberalish moderation. What follows is the Technicolor version.

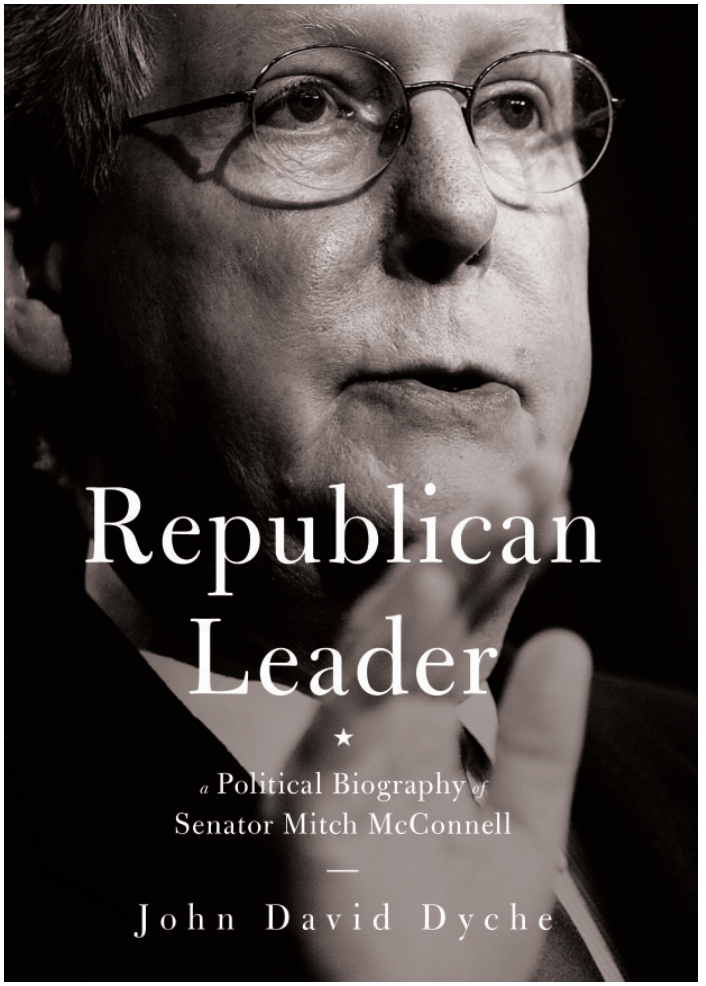
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Consider, first, the performance of the Left. Center-left parties did not merely fail to capitalize on the economic crisis; they did disastrously. In Britain the incumbent Labour government, already reeling from its worst local-election results since the 1920s, got just under 16 percent of the vote. It came in third, not only behind its main opposition, the Tories, but even behind the Euroskeptic United Kingdom Independence Party, which has not a single member of Parliament to its credit. Germany's Social Democrats won a mere 21 percent of the vote—their worst result since before World War II. Votes for France's Socialists also fell sharply. With only 16.5 percent, they barely escaped falling into third place. Italy's Socialists won a quarter of the vote—a terrible result compared with the past but pretty good by comparison with their fellow parties in Western Europe.

As for Central and Eastern Europe, the rout of socialism continued there too. Poland's Left has all but disappeared. The governing center-right Civic Platform won 28 seats of Poland's 50, but the runner-up was the center-slightly-more-right (think of Whigs and Tories) Law and Justice party, which won 15 seats. Poland's once-mighty Left, in government only five years ago, ended up with a mere seven seats. The Czech Socialists fell to 24 percent of the vote, and Hungary's governing Socialists imploded with a mere 4 seats, versus 15 for the center-right Fidesz party. Almost the only success story for the Left in the region was that of the center-left Smer party in Slovakia, which won 5 out of 13 seats. As *The Economist* pointed out, that result was obtained with less than 20 percent of the total vote against a conservative opposition divided into several parties.

Some of these results can be explained as the effects of local factors—scandals, weak leaders, poor performance in government, etc. But when the Left's performance sinks to between 16 and 25 percent across an entire continent, then there surely has to be a general explanation. That failure looks even worse against the background of a massive economic crisis that only a few weeks ago was being described as "the collapse of capitalism." We would not expect Jehovah's Witnesses to lose credibility the week after Gabriel's trumpet sounded and the Heavens parted. So why did the Left collapse instead of capitalism?

In much of Eastern and Central Europe (and also in Germany) the center-left parties have to compete with the purer socialism of simple Left parties or frankly named "unreconstructed" Communists. That siphons off potential center-left voters and presents their mainstream parties with a version of the postwar French Socialist dilemma: They can't win with the Communists and they can't win without them. A variation on this problem afflicts the Western European center-left parties. They face competition from single-issue parties on the environment, war, Third World



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
THE MOST POWERFUL MAN
IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

An inside look at **Senator Mitch McConnell**—one of America's most influential but least understood leaders.

The brand-new book *Republican Leader*—based on dozens of exclusive interviews—pulls back the curtain on the man who commands the opposition to Obama and the Democrats.

★★★

"Dyche's biography, which is respectful without being reverent, takes the measure of this remarkable man."
—GEORGE F. WILL

★★★

"A great story and Dyche tells it brilliantly."
—FRED BARNES

ISI BOOKS
THE IMPRINT OF THE INTERCOLLEGIATE STUDIES INSTITUTE

AVAILABLE AT FINE BOOKSTORES
Order online at: www.isibooks.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

development, etc., such as Europe Ecologie in France. These parties are essentially left-wing or at least anti-capitalist. They too siphon off votes.

Both of these problems can be traced to something more cataclysmic—something that happened 20 years ago in intellectual debate but is only now shaking up practical politics: namely, the death of socialism as a Big Idea. After all the veils and subterfuges have been torn away, the idea of socialism is the achievement of equality through state bureaucracy. Socialists still believe in achieving equality, but most no longer have faith in statism and some have become actively hostile to bureaucracy. True believers—at best about 10 to 12 percent of the population—vote for unreconstructed Communists. Those who are skeptical of the state and bureaucracy support the Greens and other single-issue Left parties. And those who want power (or, to be charitable, want to use state power to "nudge" society toward equality) support a center-left whose policies are diluted to win moderate votes. But the net effect of these divisions is that there is no longer a single party monopolizing the center-left vote that can reconcile conflicting policies and budgetary priorities in order to present a coherent program able to attract support from 40 percent or more of the voters. And with every passing year, such a party seems less likely.

Given the collapse of the center-left, surely the center-right must have done well? *The Economist* certainly thought so, arguing that support for center-right parties "held steady or fell slightly." But that is an unexacting standard. If the Left's vote collapses, then surely the parties of the Right should improve their standing, if not proportionately, then substantially.

In Western Europe that simply did not happen. Britain's Tories won only 29 percent of the popular vote in the European elections—and were relieved that it was a small increase of 2 percent on four years ago rather than a deeper fall. Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats fell slightly from their vote four years ago. The Spanish conservative Popular Party managed to score a modest lead of 4 percent over the Socialist government—but since the Socialists have presided over the worst economic and financial collapse in Western Europe, that almost counts as a draw. In Denmark the center-right came fifth; in Holland its vote fell by 4 percent; and in Portugal and Belgium its vote fell very slightly—just either side of 1 percent.

Only in France and Italy did conservative parties do well, partly because of divided oppositions but also because of the personal styles of their leaders, understandably in the case of Pres. Nicolas Sarkozy, less so in the case of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. In both cases, the boldness and dash of the party leaders compensated somewhat for the timidity and inadequacy of their policies. The center-right's story was also better in Eastern and Central Europe, though for different reasons.

What explains the failure of the center-right parties to capitalize more effectively on the collapse of their opponents? One possible explanation is that many of them had to take the blame for the financial crisis and economic recession. But that is hard to square with the fact that center-right parties out of power, such as the Tories, often did worse than those in power, such as Sarkozy's. Besides, the recession almost certainly helped the center-right. Conservative parties are seen by the voters as the "daddy" party better able to impose discipline and overcome crises than the soft-hearted "mommy" parties of the center-left. Chancellor Angela Merkel's tough unwillingness to follow the U.S. and Britain in spending and borrowing their way out of recession seems to have been popular. Responsibility, competence, and firmness are currently and understandably valued, and that helps to explain why the center-right has merely declined instead of plunging like the center-left. Still the question remains: Why hasn't it risen?

The answer probably lies in *The Economist*'s fourth observation: "A chunky protest vote went to populist and far-right outfits vowing to close borders, expel immigrants, or dismantle the European Union." But that explanation lumps together two quite different phenomena: (a) the wild-and-crazy guys, elected mainly in Eastern Europe, who stand for everything from anti-Semitism to a return to Stalinism, and (b) the more serious and lasting conservative parties in Holland, Denmark, Italy, Britain, and other countries, which represent voters' deep-seated resistance to uncontrolled immigration, the loss of national sovereignty, and other elite enthusiasms on Europe's center-left and center-right. Lumping the two together is a way of ensuring that neither is taken seriously, thus ignoring the legitimate issues that sustain the second group.

Responsibility, competence, and firmness are currently and understandably valued, and that helps to explain why the center-right has merely declined instead of plunging like the center-left.

Taking these distinct groups together makes little sense on two grounds. First, it is a false picture of political—and moral—reality. That can be seen most clearly in Britain, where the British National Party is offering the cinema-going voter a trailer for *Triumph of the Will* while the U.K. Independence Party is performing in one of the Ealing comedies about a decent and more traditional Britain. That kind of difference should not be blurred. Second, it conceals from the center-right's leaders the truth that these parties are poaching their own natural supporters. Until recently, center-right leaders have comforted themselves with the illusion that immigration, sovereignty, and the like were the issues of the past, and that the small parties raising them would soon disappear. Today it is increasingly clear that these are the issues of the future. A center-right that fails to champion them will soon create a divided conservative electorate and slowly imitate the decline of the center-left. **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Japanese Crossroads

Does our most important Asian ally face another decade of decline?

BY DUNCAN CURRIE

OVER the past quarter century, global perceptions of Japan have fluctuated violently. In the 1980s, the country was touted as an emerging superpower that would rival the United States. Then a Lost Decade of recession and deflation eclipsed the Rising Sun, and outsiders dismissed Japan as a basket case. The Japanese economy rebounded under Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, a conservative who held office from 2001 to 2006, during which time we heard warnings about a resurgence of right-wing nationalism. Such fears were overblown, though Koizumi's successor, Shinzo Abe, did not help matters by trying to sugarcoat Japan's practice of sex slavery during World War II. Abe's tenure was plagued by scandal and ended with his abrupt resignation in September 2007.

Today, Japanese declinism is back in vogue. The economy has plunged into its worst downturn of the post-war era, and a severe demographic crunch looms on the horizon. Japan has a remarkably low birth rate and minuscule levels of immigration. Many countries are getting grayer, but none quite so rapidly as Japan. Its population is projected to shrink dramatically by 2050. As Jeff Kingston writes in his 2004 book, *Japan's Quiet Transformation*, "Japan's demographic time-bomb poses enormous challenges to society and is expected to strain both the medical care and pension systems."

Meanwhile, Japanese politics is mired in turmoil. Since Koizumi stepped down, Japan has had three prime ministers in less than three years. Its two largest parties are both woefully unpopular. Last winter, the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ)—an ideologically diverse mix of conservatives, centrists, and ex-Socialists—seemed a lock to win the next general election, which is due by September. The party already controls the upper house of parliament (as part of a coalition). But then DPJ boss Ichiro Ozawa got embroiled in a fundraising scandal, and on May 11 he resigned. The new DPJ chief, Yukio Hatoyama, 62, is more likable than Ozawa, but he does not appear to be a strong leader. Neither does the current prime minister, Taro Aso, who is 68.

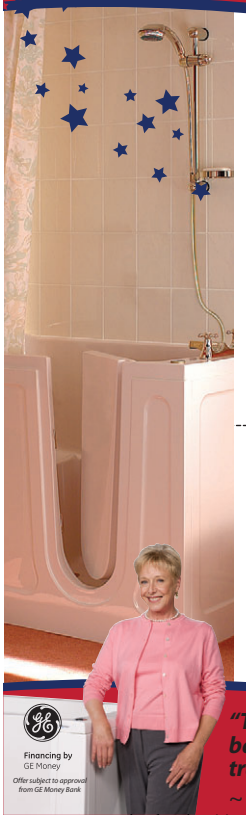
So is Japan set to reprise the 1990s, when it went through seven prime ministers and was paralyzed by economic sclerosis? On the political side, maybe. On the economic side, probably not. In the Nineties, Japan was crippled by a vicious banking crisis that the government failed to remedy. It wasn't until the Koizumi years (more than a decade after Japan's real-estate bubble collapsed) that Japanese financial institutions were forced to address their bad loans. Japan's current woes are largely the result of a steep drop in exports, which remain the principal engine of its economy. Therefore, its recovery is tied to the revival of global, and especially American, demand. Japan's first-quarter GDP and export numbers were abysmal, but the Nikkei stock average has rallied strongly since March. The country's most comprehensive economic index rose slightly in April, its first increase in nearly a year.

Signs of economic progress will help the incumbent Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has ruled Japan virtually without interruption since the creation of its modern political system in 1955. The LDP may also get a boost from North Korea's recent nuclear test and missile launches: Voters may worry that the DPJ, which was founded in 1998 and has never held power, is too inexperienced to handle such major national-security challenges.

"The DPJ has no clear foreign-policy vision," says Michael Green, who served as a senior Asia official at the National Security Council from 2001 to 2005. The party has taken populist stances on U.S. military bases in Japan and vowed to pursue a more independent foreign policy. It is unclear exactly how Hatoyama would govern as prime minister, given that his party includes both a bloc of anti-American leftists and a sizable faction of pro-American conservatives. If he followed through on some of the DPJ's campaign pledges, it could generate real friction in the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Pyongyang's latest mischief reaffirmed

Give the gift **of Independence.**



Celebrate your independence this 4th of July with a Premier Walk-In Bath.

Independence and security are only a phone call away. If you or a loved one struggle taking a bath, talk to us at Premier about our extensive range of walk-in baths.

- Enjoy a relaxing bath again, without the fear of slipping or falling.
- The walk-in door feature allows easy access and exiting.
- Hydrotherapy jets soothe away your aches and pains.

☑ **Yes! Please send me a FREE COLOR BROCHURE about Premier Walk-In Baths.**

Name
Telephone
Address
City State Zip

Send to: Premier Bathrooms Inc. 2330 South Nova Rd., South Daytona, Florida 32119

CODE 78079

Premier Care in Bathing
"Proudly Made In the USA"

"Transform your bathroom and transform your life." ~ Karen Grassle

CALL NOW • TOLL FREE
1-800-578-2899
SOURCE CODE 78079

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the importance of that alliance, which the Bush administration did much to strengthen. Since 2001, the U.S. and Japan have upgraded cooperation on a range of security issues, including missile defense and counterproliferation. Widely mocked for its "checkbook diplomacy" during the first Gulf War (to which Tokyo sent money, but not men), the Japanese government dispatched naval ships to aid the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan and deployed noncombat ground troops to help rebuild post-Saddam Iraq.

Japan has long been constrained by the straitjacket of its pacifist constitution (written by Americans after World War II). In recent years, it has embraced a more elastic interpretation of that constitution (though it has not formally amended the document) and been a more active participant in global security affairs. "Japan has come a long, long way in a relatively short period of time," a former Bush-administration official told me in early 2007.

Unfortunately, the U.S.-Japan relationship soured a bit during President Bush's last years in office, when America changed direction on North Korea. Through Christopher Hill, its envoy to the Six-Party Talks, the Bush administration shifted from a policy of robust sanctions to one of piecemeal concessions in return for dubious North Korean promises. This shift can be traced back to Pyongyang's first nuclear test, in October 2006. Two years later, just weeks before the 2008 election, the U.S. removed North Korea from the State Department's list of terror sponsors.

In the short term, says Green, the softening of U.S. policy toward North Korea did "huge" damage to America's image in Japan. The Japanese "felt betrayed by the Bush administration," says John Bolton, Bush's former United Nations ambassador. Indeed, newspapers across the political spectrum in Japan voiced concerns about America's credibility as an ally. The delisting of North Korea as a patron of terrorism was especially hard for Japan to swallow, since Pyongyang still has not come clean about the Japanese citizens it abducted during the 1970s and 1980s.

After Kim Jong Il's most recent acts of belligerence, the Obama administration pushed for tough sanctions and enhanced inspections of North Korean cargo, both of which were authorized by the U.N. Security Council. "In some ways," Green jokes, "we're all John Bolton now." But even Bolton disagrees with those—most prominently, columnist Charles Krauthammer—who believe the U.S. should urge Japan to go nuclear in response to Pyongyang's pugnacity and Beijing's foot-dragging. A nuclear-armed Japan could spur dangerous proliferation, encouraging the South Koreans and others to acquire their own atomic arsenals. It would almost certainly weaken the U.S.-Japan alliance. For that matter, Japan would seek its own nuclear deterrent only if it had lost faith in the U.S. security umbrella.

Barring such a breakdown in the alliance, Japan will not join the nuclear club anytime soon. Its public has a near-religious devotion to the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles"—Japan will not build nuclear weapons, will not maintain them, and will bar them from its territory—that were adopted by the parliament in 1971. Japan is the only country ever to have been attacked with nukes, and the anti-nuclear taboo remains extremely powerful in Japanese society. Moreover, even conservative officials seem to recognize that an independent nuclear capability would not necessarily advance Japan's interests.

On the other hand, it is no longer suicidal for a Japanese politician to discuss the nuclear option publicly. In 1999, a right-wing vice defense minister named Shingo Nishimura was forced to resign after saying that Japan might be "better off" if it possessed nuclear weapons. The national mood has grown more hawkish since then. In 2002, Shinzo Abe, then deputy chief cabinet secretary, kept his job after declaring that it would "not necessarily" be unconstitutional for Japan to defend itself with "tactical" nukes.

Tokyo is currently reevaluating its national-defense guidelines. LDP officials have drafted a policy paper recommending that Japan acquire the means to strike missile locations in enemy countries. As Kyodo News reported, Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada expressed qualms about the idea, and the policy paper itself argues that "preemptive attacks" should be off the table.

Despite the North Korean threat and the rise of China, Japan is still wary of violating its pacifist constitution. Tokyo continues to cap its annual defense spending at 1 percent of GDP, a ceiling that has been in place since the 1970s. And disputes over the legal boundaries of "collective self-defense" continue to impede greater Japanese collaboration with the United States. "Japan never ceases to disappoint," gripes a veteran Asia hand.

Yet even a nasty recession and a chaotic political scene have not stopped the Japanese from taking incremental steps to bolster their security posture. Earlier this year, Green notes, Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) conducted the first joint operation of all its branches (air, maritime, and ground), which involved missile defense. Japan is also establishing a joint command in East Africa to manage anti-piracy efforts. Green says that such initiatives reflect a broad political consensus on security issues. "The center of gravity in the Diet [the parliament] hasn't changed much since Koizumi." Which means that even if the opposition party takes power, Japan's foreign policy should stay fairly consistent.

Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of modern Singapore, famously quipped that allowing the Japanese SDF to venture overseas was like furnishing an ex-alcoholic with liqueur chocolates. A clever line, but hopelessly outdated. Since the early 1990s, Japanese forces have assisted multilateral peacekeeping and security operations across the world: from Cambodia and East Timor to Afghanistan and Iraq. These actions have boosted Japan's reputation. Getting the Japanese to move farther away from their traditional pacifism won't be easy. But Kim Jong Il is making it easier. **NR**

Japan is the only country ever to have been attacked with nukes, and the anti-nuclear taboo remains extremely powerful in Japanese society.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Undies, Comrade?

The problem of products bearing Communist symbols

BY JAY NORDLINGER

A couple of weeks ago, I got a letter from a reader in Santa Monica who wanted to complain about Leninade. This is a drink—a lemonade soda—whose bottle is dressed up Soviet-style: hammer and sickle, red star, etc. Why was this lady sounding off to me? She knew that I write rather a lot about Communist kitsch, and the use of Communist symbols. I have had a particular sideline in Che Guevara—the T-shirts and the other paraphernalia. In fact, our reader, at the end of her note, lamented that "there are quite a few apartment buildings here," in southern California, "with the portrait of Che Guevara plastered on the façade."

I wrote about this lady and Leninade in a column. And I asked readers not to be too hard on her—not to condemn her as some sort of crabapple or stiff: She was born in Russia. She felt the hammer (and sickle) of Communism. And some people just don't find the humor in such products as Leninade.

I quickly heard from the father of Leninade, an effervescent man named Danny Ginsburg. In fact, he signs himself "Yours effervescently," and no salutation ever better suited a signer. He is "The Soda Sommelier," the owner of Real Soda In Real Bottles, Ltd., in Greater L.A. He definitely means Leninade as a spoof, a joke—a sticking-it-in-the-eye of the old Bolshevik bastard. Ginsburg's grandparents fled Russia in the 1920s. He himself spent some time in the Soviet Union. He is under no illusion about that system—but he's in favor of having some fun with it. You know what he sells a case of Leninade for? $19.17.

Ginsburg says that most people from the former Soviet bloc appreciate what he does—laugh along with him. Others, like my reader in Santa Monica, recoil.

You may be unaware of it, but there's a flood of "Communist" products on the market. You can get just about anything with the hammer and sickle, or "USSR," or "CCCP" on it. How're you fixed for underwear? Go to HammerSickleStuff.com: and "treat yourself to our classy and novel panties, undies, thongs and bras with the soviet hammer and sickle logo." The sellers further say, "Be a good little neo-communist by wearing these stylish and comfortable underthings." Whatever floats your boat.

How're you doing for hats? Adidas has manufactured a line celebrating Communist states, and not just defunct ones: They have hats in honor of the "People's Republic" of China and the Castros' Cuba. About their hat honoring the Soviet Union, they say, "Show your love for the former USSR during training time." Show your love. And bear in mind that the Soviet state killed about 20 million people, in addition to stifling and immiserating countless others. All told, Communist states have killed about 100 million—and the grinding continues (in North Korea and elsewhere).

Every once in a while, the topic of Communist symbols in free countries comes up. Conservatives like me will grouse. In 2006, a man named Tim Vincent, of television's *Access Hollywood*, went on the air sporting a hammer-and-sickle T-shirt. A few years before that, London Fashion Week saw an outbreak of Communist chic (if you can imagine). The headline in the *Daily Telegraph* was, "Soviet style comes in from the cold."

But we can relax now, right? Nothing to grouse about. We have triumphed over Communism (leaving aside North Korea and a few other states). We have made commercial products out of their most cherished symbols. Hurrah! Yes, but we have triumphed over Nazism too, long ago. But where are the undies and hats bearing swastikas, and where are the T-shirts showing Hitler, Himmler, and the rest of the boys? Huh?

In 2005, Prince Harry, Charles and Diana's second child, wore a Nazi uniform to a costume party. That uniform included an armband—and all hell came down on the young prince. Moreover, a move was made in the European Parliament to ban Nazi symbols across the EU. (They have long been banned in Germany and Austria, and they are banned in some other countries as well.) A companion move was also made: to ban Communist symbols, along with the Nazi. This proposal came from parliamentarians representing Eastern Europe. And they were eloquent, as they made their case.

József Szájer, a Hungarian, said that his country had experienced both Nazism and Communism—and, really, there was nothing to choose between them. Both were "evil totalitarian" systems of the 20th century, and if Europe is to anathematize the one, it should anathematize the other. Jan Zahradil, a Czech, decried a "double standard" in Western Europe, whereby Nazism is rightly and roundly condemned while Communism is often excused, or even defended. This tends to burn those who know Communism.

Since Hitler pulled the trigger in that bunker in 1945, there has been some mockery of the Nazis, but not much: The outstanding instance is Mel Brooks's *The Producers* (in movie and Broadway-musical forms). Chaplin satirized Hitler and the Nazis in *The Great Dictator*. But that was in 1940. And he later said that, if he had known the extent of their crimes, he never would have made light of them. There has simply been a rule: You don't mess around with Nazism, and you don't get cute with Nazi symbols.

Two years ago, a clothing chain in London inadvertently stocked a bag whose design included a couple of swastikas. Big, big outcry, and instant removal. In all probability, the bag came from India, where the swastika is an old and perfectly honorable symbol (perverted by the Nazis, in their characteristic style). Indeed, Hindus in Europe protested the proposed EU ban on Nazi symbols.

That ban never came about, by the way, and neither, of course, did the companion ban (on Communist symbols). There is always the factor of freedom of expression. And different nations have come up with their own laws. For example, Hungary bans both Nazi and Communist symbols. So does Lithuania (and the Russian government chafed at the implied equation).

Right now in Poland, there is a proposal to ban both classes of symbol—and that would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SEARCH OUR ARCHIVES HERE

AND OTHER LEADING JOURNALS OF OPINION ON THE PROGRESSIVE AND CONSERVATIVE SIDES; 1,000,000 PAGES OF HISTORY AND CULTURE.

HARPERS
THE NATION
THE NEW REPUBLIC
COMMONWEAL
COMMENTARY
NATIONAL REVIEW
NACLA
THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS
THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR

HTTP://METASEARCH.OPINIONARCHIVES.COM

OPINION ARCHIVES

include Che Guevara shirts. In April, the *Telegraph*'s Warsaw correspondent wrote, "The proposal . . . reflects a Polish view of communism far different from the rose-tinted and romantic images found in the West. After experiencing 40 hard years of communism, as well as the horrors of Nazi occupation, few Poles have qualms [about] equating under law the inequities of Nazism and communism." Many other peoples are free of these qualms, too.

It is an old, sore question: the disparity between Western views of Nazism and Western views of Communism. Perhaps the top authority on this question is Paul Hollander, the Hungarian-born intellectual. He says that there are two main reasons for the disparity: First, "Communist atrocities are much less known than Nazi ones"—that is the nature of our education. And the second reason is related, I believe: "the old lingering idea that the Communists may have done bad things but had good intentions."

Hollander was once given a T-shirt combining Lenin and McDonald's—something about "McLenin's" and a "taste of Communism." He has not worn the shirt. But would he? He's not sure. A lot of us have a similar ambivalence. But one thing he knows beyond doubt: He would never be given, and probably no one would ever make, a "McHitler's" shirt.

Speaking of Lenin and Hitler, here is a story—originating with Kingsley Amis and told recently by Charles Moore, the British journalist. Amis "knew a man who was an interior decorator. One day, the man was commissioned to improve the house of a rich, left-wing woman in Hampstead. Above the main staircase was a huge portrait of Lenin. Kingsley's friend decided on a tease. 'Who's that?' he asked. . . . 'Hang on, don't tell me, don't tell me . . . I know: Hitler!'"

When it comes to Communist symbols, we all probably go with our gut—judge by our stomach, or nose. The statue of Lenin in Seattle is nauseating, I think. And so are those Adidas hats. But Danny Ginsburg's Leninade? A borderline case, at least for me.

The best judges, probably, are those who have lived under Communism. But they, of course, may disagree. About five years ago, I asked a Czech-born friend of mine to pick up some Communist kitsch for me while visiting Prague: red-star pins and the like. She did so—but said that she felt dirty and disgusted in carrying out this errand. I was sorry I'd asked. Danny Ginsburg knows people from the former Soviet bloc who just love the stuff—the kitsch. For them, it may emphasize liberation.

What should not be the case is that only people who have tasted Communism should care—but so it often seems. Earlier this year in Santa Ana, Calif., there was an art exhibition featuring Communist symbols. This drew protest from Vietnamese Americans—former refugees. And they shut the show down. A co-owner of the building told the *Los Angeles Times*, "They have factions in their community that go after anyone who in any way seems to put a positive light on Communism." Yeah, weird that.

When it comes to Communist symbols, we all probably go with our gut—judge by our stomach, or nose.

There are 8,000 more things to say, but let me conclude with a personal story—kind of a dilemma. As I mentioned before, I have written a lot about Che Guevara and "Che chic"; I am sort of associated with the subject. Indeed, the question I most often receive from readers is, "What should I read to know the truth about Guevara—to separate the man from the myth?" It was proposed, at NATIONAL REVIEW, that we have a T-shirt made up, bearing my lissome image in the Che pose. Just for fun—a novelty for readers. We decided against—a matter of gut, more than anything. Everyone and his brother has been done up in the Che pose. But the point of the man remains: He was a Latin American Beria. Americans forget lessons of Communism, if they ever learned them, and you should probably be as careful with hammers and sickles as you are with the symbol that dare not show its face on London handbags, or princely arms. **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ROMAN GENN

Fossil Future

New supplies of oil and coal must be part of any rational energy policy

BY JONAH GOLDBERG

In the Gulf of Mexico

ONE of the first things you need to know when visiting an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico is that a hard hat and safety goggles must be worn at all times. Another thing you might like to know is that the strippers on Bourbon Street prefer not to take Diners Club. But even before even that, you need to know how to remove your industrial jumpsuit underwater and turn it into a flotation device. I learned how to do that at a training facility on the outskirts of Houston, at the intersection of "Where the hell am I?" and "middle of nowhere."

The jumpsuit maneuver, which requires tying your pants legs in a knot near the crotch and then inflating the torso section, is a bit more difficult than escaping from a crashed, upside-down, underwater helicopter—something else you must learn to do (albeit in a simulator in a swimming pool). But both procedures, in their own way, involve knottedness in the nether regions.

Having completed Underwater Helicopter Egress Training, you head over to New Orleans and get on the now terrifying helicopter and fly to a mobile drilling rig more than a hundred miles out in the Gulf of Mexico—but not before the safety instructor shows you a home movie of a family finishing a helicopter tour. The mother and stuffed-bunny-carrying daughter exit first; then the father, who, in a moment of wholesome excitement, raises his arms as if to say, "That was great!" and has both his hands sliced off while the wife shrieks in horror and blood splatters the lens and, presumably, the bunny. The video has the desired effect. Everyone in the room immediately issues a Memo to Self: "Do Not Raise Arms until Clear of the Helicopter and You Are Home on Your Couch, and Even Then, Be Careful."

The thoroughness of the training course—which took twice as long as the rig tour itself—is both useful and instructive, and not only because NATIONAL REVIEW cruises do not teach you how to maximize the survivability of a leap off the Lido deck (you have an 11 percent chance of surviving a 200-foot jump into water if

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

you lack my vital training). It reminds you how seriously the oil industry takes safety. Now, fans of the cable series *Black Gold*—one of the many TV shows that profile incredibly dangerous professions, along with *Ice Road Truckers*, *Deadliest Catch*, *Grizzly Bear Teasers*, and (no doubt coming soon) *Gay Zionist Party Planners of Yemen*—might object. In the show (which was much disparaged by the pros I talked with), wildcat oilmen constantly find themselves in death-defying predicaments, having their bodies smashed and twisted by huge oil-slathered apparatuses. But those operations are akin to the "pro wrestling" matches conducted by teenagers in basements and backyards and posted on YouTube.

At major oil installations, like the platforms in the Gulf of Mexico or on the North Slope of Alaska, the scene is more like NASA Flight Control. At *Noble Paul Romano*, a mobile drilling platform (i.e., one that's not planted into the sea floor, but floats attached to enormous anchors) run by Marathon Oil, safety is an obsession (hence my Underwater Helicopter Egress Training), and they've won all sorts of awards to prove it. The last environmental "mishap" occurred nearly two years ago, in July of 2007, when a tiny amount of oil spilled in the air-compressor room. No oil hit the water. In fact, no significant spill has been recorded (and they record everything) since the *Noble Paul Romano* went into service a decade ago. And, as of this writing, they'd gone 361,768 man-hours injury- and accident-free. I asked what the last injury was. The answer: A guy smashed his finger with a hammer or some equipment. Now keep in mind: This is a massive contraption where chains, pipes, pulleys, and other moving parts hold hundreds of thousands of tons, and giant drilling doodads burrow through solid rock a couple of miles beneath roiling open seas to suck out oil and gas, almost literally without spilling a drop. That mankind can do such things with as much bloodshed as the average suburban male endures while building a tree house says something wonderful about human ingenuity.

Not surprisingly, opponents of offshore drilling often seem concerned more about the safety of the environment than that of oil workers. For instance, they assert that oil rigs discharge mercury into the Gulf of Mexico. That is possible, but the total amount would equal about 0.7 percent of the mercury poured into the Gulf by the Mississippi River, and the Florida Institute of Technology has found that methylmercury levels around oil rigs are indistinguishable from those in other areas. Other complaints include the claim that oil rigs are inherently risky because they lie in the path of hurricanes, which could cause oil spills. This is true up to a point—hurricanes are a major challenge, and they cause real damage. I asked a manager on the *Noble Paul Romano* what it is like onboard during a hurricane. He answered, "I don't know and I really wouldn't want to find out." He doesn't know because, days in advance of the hurricane, crews work tirelessly to secure the installation and leave. When they return, metal is often twisted, structures washed away. The metal stairs running alongside the exterior of another rig I visited, the *Lobster*, were badly buckled in spots from hurricane damage. Nonetheless, hurricanes don't cause major spills. Roughly 75 percent of the rigs in the Gulf of Mexico were hit by two back-to-back Category 5 hurricanes, Katrina and Rita, in 2005. According to the Minerals Management Service, no major spills resulted.

The simple fact is that environmental safety, or "stewardship"—or, if you prefer, bad-publicity-and-trial-lawyer-phobic ass-covering—is something of a religion on these rigs. If your candy-bar wrapper blows overboard, or if you drop a ballpoint pen over the side, you have to file an incident report and prove to both management and numerous federal agencies that you did everything possible to retrieve it from the ocean. There's zero tolerance for anything going in the water that's not supposed to be there. This ethos is hardly unique to Gulf Coast operations. As I reported from the North Slope of Alaska (see "Ugh, Wilderness!" in the Aug. 6, 2001, issue of National Review), the image, popularized by greens, of rapacious oil companies' staining Mother Nature's knickers has long been myth rather than reality. "If I took a leak out there, I'd get fired," an engineer told me on the North Slope. "In the winter, if you spill some coffee into the snow, you'd better go get a shovel and dig it up."

The image, popularized by greens, of rapacious oil companies' staining Mother Nature's knickers has long been myth rather than reality.

Now, one does not want to traffic in negative stereotypes or make unfair generalizations about the Third World, but there's good reason to believe that the rigs off the coast of Nigeria do not take safety and the environment as seriously. Likewise, one might venture to say that the no doubt nature-loving folk of the petrostate Putinstan, formerly known as Russia, do not generate reams of paperwork every time a pierogi wrapper accidentally goes overboard or the toe that goes wee-wee-wee all the way home is crunched in an accident. And given that China's effort to lock up Africa's natural resources has led it to turn such famous environmental stewards and lovers of humanity as Sudan and Zimbabwe into client states, it does not seem far-fetched to conjecture that occupational safety is not a passion among Chinese contractors either.

Truth be told, the American majors didn't always take this stuff so seriously themselves. But that has changed. Since a platform blowout off the coast of Santa Barbara in 1969, there hasn't been a large oil spill from offshore drilling in the United States. And, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, offshore drilling has had a 99.999 percent safety record since 1975. One-thousandth of 1 percent of the oil pumped since then has spilled, mostly in relatively tiny quantities that were easy to clean up. This contrasts sharply with the record of big oil tankers, which we increasingly rely on because we can't drill domestically. Offshore drilling prevents spills in another way as well. Thanks to a National Academy of Sciences study, even conser-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vation groups grudgingly admit that thalassic seepage, i.e. natural oozing—call it Gaian incontinence—is a greater source of oil pollution on America's coasts than offshore drilling. In fact, peer-reviewed studies confirm that drilling for subsea oil reduces natural seepage, by alleviating the pressure on poor Mother Nature's bladder. Needless to say, no one in the oil industry is waiting for a thank-you note from Greenpeace.

Still, you'd think environmentalists and regulators would try to take more credit for their fantastic transformation of oil exploration into one of the most environmentally sensitive endeavors in all of heavy industry. The "footprint" of oil rigs, on land and at sea, has been shrinking steadily over the last 40 years, thanks largely to directional drilling. Instead of sinking one pipe straight down, drills can now go out in all directions, like robotic octopus tentacles. In 1970, a 20-acre offshore oil rig could drill a mere 0.8 square miles at 10,000 feet. Today, an oil rig of just 2 acres can drill over 80 square miles—again, while spilling almost none of it.

One would think that's good news. After all, the 1969 Santa Barbara spill was very, very expensive—though not so much in terms of the clean-up itself. Rather, the mishap gave birth to the environmental movement, particularly as it relates to the oil industry. An organization called GOO—Get Oil Out!—was formed in response to the accident. Ironically, its mission was to Leave Oil In. The following year we had the first Earth Day, and from there the Eco-Industrial Complex was up and running.

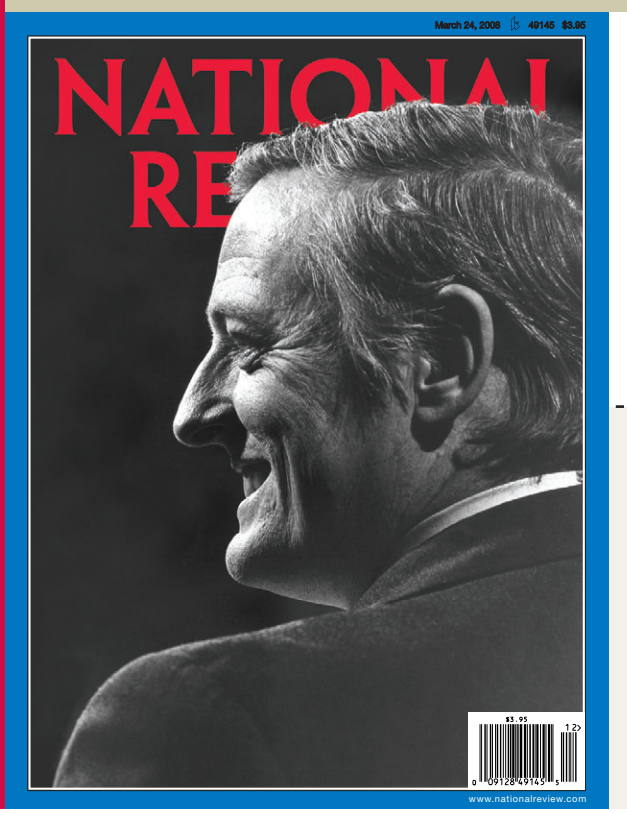
The timeline is worth remembering, because it shows that petrophobia long predates the current mania over global warming. It's hardly a novel insight among conservatives that climate change is a near-perfect rationalization for a preexisting green agenda—with the glaring exception of environmentalists' continuing objections to nuclear power (more on that in a moment). In fact, it's hardly a novel insight for liberals either. In 1990 Sen. Tim Wirth (D., Colo.) famously said: "We've got to ride the global-warming issue. Even if the theory of global warming is wrong, we will be doing the right thing, in terms of economic policy and environmental policy."

Shockingly, or at least dismayingly, this profoundly undemocratic framing of global warming remains a fixture of mainstream liberalism. Thomas Friedman recently explained on *Meet the Press*: "If climate change is a hoax, it's the greatest [he means best, not biggest] hoax ever perpetrated on the United States of America. Because everything we would do to get ready for climate change, to build this new green industry, would make us more respected, more entrepreneurial, more competitive, more healthy as a country."

But is that true? Before we get to the real arguments, let's brush aside the Democrats' supposed concern for good jobs at good wages. They get teary-eyed about their mythical 5 million "green jobs," most of which would involve temporary gigs weatherizing granny's attic, replacing lightbulbs at the DMV, and hiring ACORN to shake down businesses that use too much air conditioning. Meanwhile, the oil industry is among the highest-paid professions in the United States (typical workers make double

store.nationalreview.com

The Buckley Memorial Issue



The special 76-page issue includes reflections, essays, and remembrances from Henry Kissinger, Rush Limbaugh, Christopher Buckley, Priscilla Buckley, Tom Wolfe, Mark Steyn, Rich Lowry, Alistair Horne, Garry Wills, Joe Lieberman, Paul Johnson, John O'Sullivan, Rick Brookhiser, Mona Charen, Ramesh Ponnuru, Jay Nordlinger, Jason Steorts, Ed Capano, William Rusher, Dan Oliver, Michael Kinsley, Charles Kesler, Roger Kimball, Peter Robinson, Taki Theodoracopulos, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Ira Glasser, Linda Bridges, Anthony Dick, Neal Freeman, Jeff Hart, and Danilo Petronovich. Supplies are limited.

National Review • 215 Lexington Avenue • New York, NY • 10016

Send me _____ copies of the March 24, 2008 WFB Memorial issue (the cost is $14.95 per copy, which includes free shipping and handling). I enclose payment of $ _____. Send to:

Name

Address

City

State ZIP

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Check enclosed (payable to *National Review*)

☐ Bill my ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Acct. No.

Expir. Date

Signature

(N.Y. state residents must add sales tax of 8.375%. Foreign orders add $10.00.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the national average). It employs 1.8 million people and indirectly supports another 4 million. A study commissioned by the American Petroleum Institute (which sponsored my Gulf tour) estimates that if we opened the areas that have long been off-limits to drilling, it would generate some 160,000 new jobs over the next 20 years and raise $1.7 trillion in government revenue. That is a lot of cheese, possibly even enough to pay for Barack Obama's health-care scheme.

THE first *serious* argument one hears for reducing our petroleum consumption is that we must free ourselves from "foreign oil." Deliberately left out of the conversation is that "foreign oil" is not the same as "Middle Eastern oil." Regardless, we get about 40 percent of our oil from domestic production and the vast majority of our imported oil from non-Middle Eastern sources. (Canada sends us as much oil as the entire Persian Gulf region, and Mexico not much less.) But in any case, if "foreign oil" is a concern, why not drill *in the United States*? More oil from us means less from foreigners. Right?

The next anti-drilling argument: Either America or the world is running out of oil. Neither assertion is true. Okay, fine: Just as in the long run we're all dead, in the long run we will run out of oil. In the long run, the sun will also burn out, and Joe Biden might even stop talking. In the more immediate term, say the next 30 to 90 years, oil (and, perhaps more important, coal) isn't going away.

In the 1970s—again, long before global warming was the "greatest hoax" imaginable—the Club of Rome, a think tank, guaranteed that we'd run out of oil by now. Yet the amount of available oil has expanded greatly since then. According to U.S. Geological Survey estimates, we've got just shy of 6 trillion barrels of oil or its equivalent. Ronald Bailey, *Reason* magazine's science correspondent, writes that this means "82 percent of the world's endowment of oil and gas resources remain to be used." Bailey, who did a thorough survey of the "peak oil" debate, found that most of the world's leading analysts and agencies simply do not think we are running out of oil.

The doomsaying/abundance cycle keeps repeating itself. In 1995 the USGS said that the Bakken formation, in North Dakota and Montana, had a modest amount of oil. It now believes there are 3 to 4 billion barrels there—25 times the 1995 estimate. The Minerals Management Service (MMS) insisted in 1987 that there were a "mere" 9 billion barrels of oil in the Gulf of Mexico. Twenty years later that estimate is up to 45 billion. Prudhoe Bay in Alaska has already generated 15 billion barrels of oil and natural-gas liquids even though the government insisted the needle would hit empty at 9 billion. Right now, the MMS guesses that the Atlantic and Pacific Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) has 14.3 billion barrels of oil and 55 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. But that number is almost surely very low, because the government has kept oil companies from taking a serious look at what's down there, and they will spend tens or hundreds of millions of dollars looking for oil only if there's a good chance the government will let them drill for it.

One of the reasons the numbers keep going up is that we've gotten so much better at finding oil, thanks to seismic imaging and the like. Also, drills can extract oil from ever tighter spots, squeezing more and more from each field. The drills on the *Noble Paul Romano* have incredibly sophisticated sensors that send real-time data about what the drill bit is cutting through to monitors on deck. Ever-improving technology also allows us to get oil we once thought was too hard to reach. We haven't figured out how to extract oil from shale in environmentally safe and economically feasible ways—yet—but estimates put the amount of shale oil in the Intermountain West at 1.2 to 1.8 trillion barrels. If we could recover 800 billion barrels of that, America would have three times Saudi Arabia's oil stockpile. This would presumably aid the process of weaning ourselves from Middle Eastern oil (if that really were a serious concern).

Drilling opponents love to point out that we don't have enough oil to be energy-independent. That's a straw man. No one thinks we can or should be fully energy-independent. Canada may be annoying from time to time, but who's scared of buying its oil? More important, oil markets are extremely sensitive, with the prices set at the margin. Small increases in supply have large effects on demand. But a larger and more diverse supply will reduce price volatility by making sudden disruptions (a war, a hurricane) less worrisome. One way to diversify and enlarge supply is to find more oil here in the U.S.—but that cannot happen if the government won't allow it.

Just as in the long run we're all dead, in the long run we will run out of oil. In the long run, the sun will also burn out, and Joe Biden might even stop talking.

Which brings us to the futility of the "Stop Me Before I Drill Again" mentality that characterizes the Democratic party and the environmental movement. We are constantly told that America must "take the lead" on global warming in order to persuade the rest of the world to cut their own emissions. But America has restricted domestic drilling for decades. Has anyone—anywhere—followed our example? No. Everywhere in the world, governments jump for joy when they discover new oil fields to exploit. Tell a Brazilian official that he should stop drilling because drilling is just wrong, and, once he realizes you're not joking, he'll throw his caipirinha in your face.

No serious student of energy and development economics thinks that oil will become less important in at least the next several decades. Every forecast shows demand—domestic and worldwide—going up steadily, or even sharply. Perhaps more importantly, this is also true of coal. China, which is building a new coal-fired power plant every 10 days, has surpassed the U.S. to become the biggest CO_2 emitter in the world, and very soon India and Brazil will overtake America as well. They have no intention of abandoning cheap, reliable, and powerful fossil fuels—that they own—in favor of incredibly inefficient,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

• Hydrophobic Coat Repels Moisture, Fog & Water
• Optical-Grade AR Anti-Reflective Coating Cuts Both Direct & Reflective Glare
• Sea/Salt-Water-Resistant Coat Repels Abrasion
• Highest Color, Contrast, Definition Capabilities
• Ergonomically Designed – Perfect Fit for Every Facial Profile
• Anti-Static "EMI-Guard" Coat Repels Dust & Irritating Particles – Great for Sensitive Eyes!
• Exquisite Hand-Made Frames in Tortoise and Black
• Crack Resistant –Impact Resistant
• Patented, Polarized Apollo-Gold™ Triple-Filter Lens Technology Offers 100% UVA, UVB & Blue-Light Protection, Maximum Clarity & Definition
• "No-Smudge" "No Fingerprint" Oleophobic Coat
Eagle Eyes®

One Giant Leap for Eye Protection

Eagle Eyes® Apollo Gold™ sunglasses are quite simply the most advanced eye protection ever created

Spacewalking astronauts don't care about designer labels. You can't be concerned about fashion when floating 186 miles above the Earth, hurtling through space at 10 times the speed of a bullet. It's much more important to know that your equipment is up to the job.

Even though a mission to repair the International Space Station seems more dramatic than a morning commute, your personal safety is no less important. That's why Eagle Eyes® is proud to introduce the advanced **Apollo Gold**™ optical sunglasses, developed from original NASA Optical Lens Technology.

Unfiltered direct sunlight has always been a problem for test pilots and astronauts. That's why, to protect their eyes, their faceplates require the most advanced optics ever invented.

Eye-protection inspired by nature. Plenty of companies make aviator sunglasses, but few understand aviation like NASA. From microchips to GPS, NASA's team of scientists have been behind some of the greatest technological advances of the last 50 years.

NASA scientists looked to nature for a solution to eye protection which led them to their studies on how eagles can simultaneously distinguish their prey from their surroundings with utmost precision, while protecting their eyes from sunlight.

Who Better to Know About the Best UV Eye Protection than America's Astronauts?

"I have worn the EAGLE EYES® brand for years and depend upon their superb capabilities in UV eye protection, glare reduction and vision-enhancement."

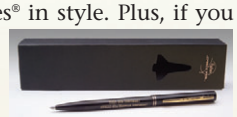
— WALTER CUNNINGHAM, APOLLO-7 ASTRONAUT

NASA scientists independently replicated this same technology into Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ optical sunglasses, serious sun-protection that offers **12 distinct performance levels** in a single lens. Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ patented, polarized lens technology was tested to enhance vision while protecting from the sun's harmful UVA, UVB radiation and blue-light.

Developed from Original NASA Optic Technology, EAGLE EYES® is the ONLY Sunglass Lens Certified by the SPACE FOUNDATION for UVR & Blue-Light Protection

Unparalleled clarity. With their patented triple filtering system, Eagle Eyes® reduces the blinding glare you may encounter while driving or enjoying outside activities. This technology produces unparalleled visual clarity, contrast and definition and blocks the harsh UV light while enhancing the colors of your environment. All of this with a "no smudge"/no fingerprint oleophobic coating.

The Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ frames feature an aggressive ergonomic design with 2X scratch-resistant coatings, affording maximum durability while maintaining crack and impact resistance. You will also receive one soft zipper case and a micro-fiber cleaning pouch & cloth with anti-fog cleaner so you can carry and protect your Eagle Eyes® in style. Plus, if you are not thrilled with the Eagle Eyes® **Apollo Gold**™ technology, simply return them within 30 days for a full refund of your purchase price.



FREE Fisher® Space Pen with your order—a $25.00 value!

- Sealed, pressurized ink cartridge
- Developed for NASA and used by America's astronauts
- Writes underwater, at any angle, and even upside down!

Not Available in Stores

SHOP & COMPARE! Over $300 worth of lens & frame technology.

Eagle Eyes® *Apollo Gold*™ Sunglasses ~~$295~~

Now *only* $95 +S&H

Includes FREE Limited Edition Engraved Anniversary Fisher® Space Pen with order.

Call now to take advantage of this limited offer.

1-888-306-7178

Promotional Code EAG141-01
Please mention this code when you call.

Stauer

14101 Southcross Drive W.,
Dept. EAG141-01
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.stauer.com

America Celebrates **50 Years** *of Space Technology!*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unproven, and expensive "alternative" energy that they'd have to buy from America or Europe. This is true not only because fossil-fuel energy is cost-effective in its own right, but also because they've already paid for the infrastructure.

Peter Huber writes in *City Journal*, "Ten countries ruled by nasty people control 80 percent of the planet's oil reserves—about 1 trillion barrels, currently worth about $40 trillion." Then he gets to the heart of the matter. "If $40 trillion worth of gold were located where most of the oil is, one could only scoff at any suggestion that we might somehow persuade the nasty people to leave the wealth buried. They can lift most of their oil at a cost well under $10 a barrel. They will drill. They will pump. And they will find buyers. Oil is all they've got."

And continuing demand for fossil fuels isn't just about "greed." Especially in the case of coal, it is a matter of lifting people out of poverty. Saudi princes may need to keep pumping to make payments on their super-yachts in Monaco and Nice, but India is burning coal to feed, clothe, and educate hundreds of millions of people, and there's no way "green" technology will replace coal for generations. Paul Maeder, a partner at Highland Capital who focuses on clean technology, said at a conference last spring that if you "increase the efficiency of coal by 1 percent, [you will] replace all the power from solar by a factor of 30."

In short, Kyoto- and Waxman-Markey-style measures will do nothing to stem the greatest sources of carbon emissions (fossil fuels in developing countries) in years to come. They will, however, result in American industry's outsourcing its work to countries with cheap energy (which is why the beatified souls at Google now build their server farms outside the U.S.).

"Drill, baby, drill" of course falls short of a serious energy policy. But a serious energy policy would certainly involve plenty of drilling—if economically feasible. Indeed, the best argument against more domestic drilling is that it's too expensive. God in His majestic, mysterious wisdom gave the Saudis oil reserves that are very easy to get at. Our (remaining) oil tends to be harder to reach. A good rule of thumb is that the price of oil needs to be reliably above $50 per barrel to make complex drilling of the type that would be required on the Outer Continental Shelf economically sustainable.

In part, that's because our oil production is still a private-sector affair, which makes us something of an exception to the global norm. One of the most significant trends in the last 40 years is that foreign oil companies have essentially become sovereign wealth funds. In 1970, 85 percent of oil reserves were controlled by investor-owned companies and 15 percent by national oil firms and Soviet "companies." In 2007, investor-owned companies controlled just 6 percent of reserves while nationalized firms owned or substantially controlled 94 percent. The Saudi Arabian Oil Company controls 20 percent of the world's reserves, the Iranian Oil Company 10 percent, Iraq's National Oil Company 9 percent, and so on. ExxonMobil—our biggest oil company, and the poster boy of "Big Oil"—controls just over half of 1 percent (0.58 percent). Many of these national oil companies socialize their risk in oil exploration, while we—properly—ask our oil companies to carry the burden alone.

There's an irony here. Given Obama's penchant for nationalizing industries and sharing burdens in order to "create or save" jobs, he should want to subsidize and nationalize oil exploration here at home. Believers in the free market should oppose that (for starters, national oil companies are far more economically inefficient and environmentally harmful), but it would nonetheless be a more serious energy policy than what the Democrats support now. True, last summer's high gas prices forced some Democrats to vote to lift the congressional moratorium on OCS drilling, but Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is doing everything he can to prevent this while Waxman-Markey wends its way through Congress.

Developing alternative energy sources makes sense, but recognizing reality makes sense too. And the reality is that the world is going to keep burning fossil fuels for at least a generation.

The notion that windmills, solar panels, and biofuels can easily replace fossil fuels is a joke, and so is the idea that you can tax American industry and consumers to solve global warming, or even put a dent in it. Still, conservatives and other realists can be more generous toward environmentalists. Greens are good at pointing out potential problems and at pressuring government and industry to come up with solutions—sometimes even the right solutions. They deserve significant credit for forcing industry to improve the safety of domestic oil drilling. But when they are allowed to make policy, they usually mess it up. For example, Huber notes that if greens hadn't hamstrung the nuclear industry after the relatively minor Three Mile Island "disaster," America would be in much better shape. In fact, we would be "in compliance with the Kyoto Protocol today if we could simply undo their handiwork and conjure back into existence the nuclear plants that were in the pipeline in nuclear power's heyday." Greens should be popping organic champagne at scores of nuclear-plant ribbon cuttings. Instead, they are shutting Yucca Mountain, further hobbling America's nuclear industry.

Developing alternative energy sources and improving efficiency makes sense, but recognizing reality makes sense too. And the reality is that the world is going to keep burning fossil fuels for at least a generation. If climate change is a real threat, we should be investing in ways to mitigate it directly (ending agriculture subsidies in order to grow more carbon-inhaling forests would be a nice place to start). Instead we are knowingly and needlessly punishing ourselves, under the influence of "the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the United States of America." **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Misremembering REAGAN

The Gipper still has lessons to teach—just not the ones we usually hear

BY RAMESH PONNURU

'REPUBLICANS have attempted to lead with one eye on the rear-view mirror, gazing at the fading reflection of Ronald Reagan. . . . But Ronald Reagan cannot win the victory for Republicans in [the next election], and the party had best get busy finding fresh ideas and new leaders." Ralph Reed wrote those words after the Republicans lost the election—the election of 1998.

Since then, Reagan's reflection has faded still more. Yet the tendency Reed lamented has only gotten stronger. Reagan's death, the reevaluation of his presidency by historians (including liberal historians), and, above all, the political failure of George W. Bush have made conservatives cling to Reagan's memory more fiercely. In 2008, during the first presidential-primary campaign since Reagan died, each of the Republican candidates presented himself as his reincarnation. After Republicans lost the election, conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly offered familiar advice: "Republicans should follow Ronald Reagan's example." Conservative congressman Patrick McHenry is running a PAC that seeks "to return the Republican party to its Ronald Reagan roots." The Heritage Foundation's website seeks to resolve today's policy debates by asking, "What would Reagan do?"

Much of the debate over the Republican party's future concerns Reagan. Should the party return to Reaganism, as the "traditionalists" argue, or move beyond it, as the "reformers" say? At a recent party gathering, Jeb Bush was reported to have thrown in his lot with the reformers and urged the party to let go of Reagan's memory. (There are conflicting accounts of what Bush said.) Several conservatives who had previously been fans of the former Florida governor attacked him lustily and in public for the alleged slight.

Liberals deride the Right's fixation with Reagan, and even some conservatives roll their eyes about it. When invoking Reagan, conservatives are prone to two characteristic vices: hero-worship and nostalgia. To hear some conservatives talk, you would forget that Reagan was a human being who made mistakes, including in office. You would certainly forget that movement conservatives were frequently exasperated with Reagan's administration.

Nostalgia is the more serious charge. Conservatives may be looking for a presidential candidate to present himself as "the next Reagan"—the Republican field in 2008 certainly thought so—but the public at large is not. It has, after all, been more than 20 years since Reagan held office. The country has changed, and many observers say that his agenda and even his political vision are now obsolete. "I love Reagan too," Republican strategist Mike Murphy recently wrote in *Time*. "But demographics no longer do."

Liberals may disdain what they call the "cult of Reagan," but Republicans' affection and respect for the man who won the Cold War seems a lot less cultish than their own infatuation with President Obama. Reagan was the most consequential president of the last 35 years, the most successful Republican president of the last century, and the president most associated with the conservative movement. Of course conservatives should try to learn from his example.

If, that is, they can decide which Reagan to learn from. There are quite a few on offer. There is the sunny, irenic Reagan. At a reception following the unveiling of a statue of Reagan in the Capitol, RNC chairman Michael Steele said, "You never heard a harsh word come out of his mouth." (What about the "evil empire" and "welfare queens"?) There is the libertarian Reagan: Former congressman and media personality Joe Scarborough recently complained that Republicans had gone astray by forgetting the maxim, which he attributed to Reagan, that the government is best that governs least. (This was right after Scarborough complained that Republicans had gone too far in deregulating Wall Street.) The liberals' Reagan, meanwhile, is defined less by his principles than by the compromises he made to them: less by the large tax cuts he won than by the smaller tax increases he accepted.

The conservatives who summon Reagan's ghost for use in today's arguments usually use him as a stand-in for doctrinal purity. He illustrates the alleged axiom that true-blue conservatism—these days we would probably have to say true-red—wins elections. His leadership of his party was bookended by moderate-Republican failure. Presidents Nixon and Ford brought their party so low that in their aftermath it considered changing its name. The elder President Bush wasn't just a one-termer; his vote in successive elections dropped more than that of any president since Hoover (another moderate Republican, as historically minded conservatives will inform you). Many conservatives draw the lesson that the GOP is better-off without its non-Reaganite politicians, now dubbed RINOs, for "Republicans in name only."

Such Republicans regularly put up roadblocks in President Reagan's path, and he was frequently tart about them in his diaries. Yet he never supported primary campaigns against them. He challenged an incumbent Republican in a primary himself, of course, in 1976. But he did not support his former aide Jeffrey Bell in his 1978 primary against New Jersey senator Clifford Case. His White House even supported Jim Jeffords of Vermont. After he won the battle over the basic direction of the party, he seems to have concluded in practice that further intra-party fighting was counterproductive. He may have been on to something. It is melancholy for conservatives to contemplate that yesterday's liberal Republican senators have been replaced far more often by liberal Democrats than by conservative Republicans.

REAGAN'S practice ran counter to our superficial impressions of him in other respects, too. "It's true hard work never killed anyone," he famously quipped, "but I figure, why take the chance?" Reagan had his reasons for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wanting his political career to seem effortless. It can be useful for a politician to be underestimated, and for his utterances to sound like pure expressions of common sense. But we now have an extensive documentary record that shows that Reagan worked extremely hard both on his policies and on his rhetoric.

As a conservative spokesman, the governor of the largest state, and then a presidential-candidate-in-waiting, Reagan had taken and defended positions on a multitude of issues. Compared with some later Republican leaders, such as the first Bush and Sen. John McCain, Reagan cared about a broader range of policies and knew more about them. He didn't make up positions on the fly or go with his gut. He had also honed his explanations of why he sought some reforms and rejected other proposals. Steven Hayward, the second volume of whose excellent history *The Age of Reagan* appears this summer, points out that it took practice and attention as well as talent for Reagan to become the Great Communicator. Reagan could ramble through responses to questions and even occasionally flub his lines. But he concentrated on getting his most important messages across, and doing it succinctly.

Are Reagan's would-be successors willing to follow this example? Bush, Dole, Bush, and McCain didn't. None of them could talk, and some of them seemed to disdain the enterprise. One hopes that Sarah Palin is doing her homework on national policy issues behind the scenes, prepared to reemerge with an unquestioned mastery of them. In her career in national politics, she has given one fine speech, at last year's party convention. Nothing as good has followed.

CONTEMPORARY Republican politicians might find two features of Reagan's rhetoric instructive. The first is that when he was not appearing before movement audiences, his conservatism was rarely explicit. He did not advertise his conformity to a school of thought even when he did, in fact, conform. He did not, that is, sell his policies on the basis of their conservatism. Rather the reverse: He used attractive policies to get people to give his conservatism a look. Hayward notes that Reagan's televised speech on behalf of Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign was "quite ideological," but that Reagan presented the choice before Americans as "up or down" rather than "left or right."

The second is that the American Founding loomed large in Reagan's rhetoric. The political scientist Andrew Busch has found that during his presidency Reagan mentioned the Founders more than his four immediate predecessors combined. He mentioned the Constitution ten times in his memoirs, compared with zero for those predecessors. Those of us who believe that our political inheritance from the Founders is what conservatives ought to be trying to conserve will naturally find this fact heartening. No serious student of Reagan can believe that his constitutionalism was other than sincere. It also served him well politically. It promoted unity among his sometimes fractious supporters. It rooted him in American tradition even as his opponents called him a radical. It provided a connective thread, a coherence, a seriousness, and even a nobility to his politics that it might otherwise have lacked.

Reagan's constitutionalism puts him squarely in the "traditionalist" camp of today's intra-conservative debates. Taken in full, though, his record shows how misconceived those debates are. Some of his current admirers make him out to be a supremely gifted exponent of a timeless conservative platform, as though he were merely Barry Goldwater with better public-relations skills. Yet Reagan differed in both his program and, especially, his emphases.

John O'Sullivan has written that "Reaganism was not an innovation in political thought":

> It was conservative common sense applied to the problems that had developed in the 1960s and 1970s. To the stagflation of the economy, it applied tax cuts and the monetary control of inflation; to the market-sharing cartel of OPEC, it applied price decontrol and the "magic of the marketplace"; and to the revived threat from the Soviet Union it applied a military build-up and economic competition.
>
> These policies were what most conservatives would have recommended as answers to these problems at most times in [the 20th] century. The only novel thing about them is that they were actually carried out.

That is not quite right. Reagan was an innovator in key respects. It is true, for example, that most conservatives harbored a preference for lower spending and lower taxes. But the previous conservative orthodoxy was content to wait until some future day when spending was lowered to embark on tax cuts. Hence Goldwater voted against Kennedy's tax reductions. Reagan redefined the conservative orthodoxy on this issue.

I quote O'Sullivan at length because he nonetheless grasps something that other admirers of Reagan have scanted: Reaganism succeeded as statecraft because it applied characteristically conservative insights to the challenges of his time. Reagan wanted to reform entitlement programs, just as Goldwater did; but he saw that the country had more pressing needs, such as for tax reduction. The tight connection between Reagan's agenda and the nation's circumstances tends to elude us these days—so much so that we misquote one of his signature lines. Everyone remembers that he said in his first inaugural address that "government is not the solution, government is the problem." Everyone forgets that the line began "In this present crisis." He wasn't saying that government was always "the problem," let alone that it would always be the problem in the same way that it was in 1981.

It is thus a mistake to assume that keeping true to the spirit of Reaganism requires contemporary conservatives to press forward with his administration's program: to keep trying to reduce the top income-tax rate, for example, with the same urgency he brought to the task. A conservative today should share Reagan's conservative preference for lower taxes and a less socially harmful tax code. But he might conclude that, in part because Reagan changed our circumstances, the tax that most needs lowering today is the payroll tax. Or he might conclude that a free-market reform of health care is more important now than any changes to the tax code.

Gov. Mitch Daniels of Indiana says that Republicans must be the party of hope, not the party of memory. Reagan managed to lead both parties simultaneously. George Will, correcting a widespread misunderstanding at the time Reagan took office, said that he did not wish to take the country back to the past: He wanted to restore the past's way of facing the future. Conservatism must constantly adapt. Burke knew it. So did Reagan. He was simultaneously a traditionalist and a reformer. Let all conservatives be so. **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How Does This 69-Year-Old Doctor Have the Body of a 30-Year-Old?

CENEGENICS®
medical institute

GQ suggests it's the path to ***reversing the signs and symptoms of aging.*** It's also gotten the attention of *Today, 60 Minutes, Nightline* and *The Associated Press*.

Find out more about the Cenegenics® program, a unique and balanced combination of nutrition, exercise and hormone optimization, when clinically indicated.

BENEFITS MAY INCLUDE:

Decreased Risk of Age-Related Disease
Improved Muscle Tone
Decreased Body Fat
Increased Energy
Increased Sex Drive
Sharper Thinking

JEFFRY S. LIFE, MD, PhD

Before Cenegenics, Age 64	After Cenegenics, Age 69
21% Body Fat	10% Body Fat
157.6 lbs Lean Muscle Tissue	164.2 lbs Lean Muscle Tissue

Data compiled by the GE Lunar Prodigy DXA scan
Dr. Life's photo is not enhanced in any way

At Cenegenics, patients are successful business people and professionals. In fact, more than 1,500 of their 15,000 patients worldwide are physicians and their families. **Call today to speak one-on-one with a Cenegenics medical doctor. Strictly confidential, no obligation. Register online to receive the *GQ* article and *The Complete Guide to Healthy Aging*.**

CALL
866.350.8799

REGISTER ONLINE
www.cenegenics-nr.com

NO INSURANCE AND NO MEDICARE ACCEPTED

ADVERTISEMENT
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The REDHUNTERS

A remarkable duo's pursuit of former spies and historical truth

BY JOHN J. MILLER

THE chase began on Google. Harvey Klehr typed "Russell McNutt" into the search box. Thousands of results flooded his computer. Klehr scoured them. "On about the 895th reference," he recalls, "we found the clue that led us to him."

Months earlier, Klehr and his colleague, John Earl Haynes, had spotted McNutt's name in notebooks smuggled out of Russia. It was linked to a couple of aliases that Soviet intelligence operatives had used for one of their American agents in the 1940s. FBI investigators had known about the aliases—first "Fogel," later changed to "Persian"—for decades. Researchers outside the government were aware of them as well because they had appeared in the decrypted Venona cables, released to the public in the 1990s. But nobody knew the identity behind the code name. It was a Cold War enigma.

It turned out that McNutt was living in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, in an exclusive community that featured a golf course designed by Lee Trevino. McNutt was in his nineties, finishing a life in which he had risen to become chief engineer of a large oil company. He was also the Manhattan Project's last surviving spy—lost to history, until Haynes and Klehr finally tracked him down.

For Haynes and Klehr, unmasking spies is a vocation. Since 1992, they have co-authored seven books. Most rely on documents unearthed in Soviet archives and break new ground in the study of espionage. The latest is *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America*, recently published by Yale University Press. It's based on the notebooks of Alexander Vassiliev, a former KGB agent who snuck them out of Moscow. The double life of Russell McNutt is just one of its many revelations. Other discoveries include new information on the guilt of Alger Hiss (previously well established, now irreversibly certain), evidence that the KGB made contact with Ernest Hemingway (the novelist apparently toyed with his potential handlers but didn't turn over information), and proof that Soviet intelligence failed to recruit the physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer (though he was probably at one time a member of the Communist party). Most controversially, Haynes and Klehr show that the journalist I. F. Stone, a hero to American leftists, was a Soviet asset in the 1930s. These new findings, combined with their previous work, confirm Haynes and Klehr as America's greatest historical spy hunters.

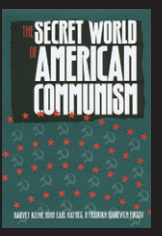
Neither author expected his career to evolve this way. Today, the 64-year-old Haynes occupies a windowless office at the Library of Congress, where he is charged with acquiring the papers of 20th-century political figures—everyone from Donald Rumsfeld to former NR publisher William Rusher. His spy-hunting takes place primarily at night and on weekends. Klehr is a 63-year-old professor at Emory University. He has a little more flexibility with his schedule, but still teaches a full load of courses and also serves on the National Council on the Humanities. In separate interviews, both men use the word "accidental" to describe their professional trajectories—perhaps a coincidence, but more likely an example of how much they've come to think alike during their long collaboration. "I doubt we've ever disagreed on anything important," says Haynes. "I'm not sure we're even capable of it anymore."

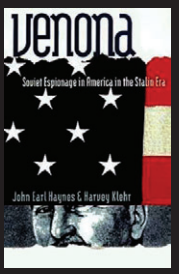
As a graduate student in the 1960s, Klehr attended anti-war rallies. "I was something of a Marxist," he says. Yet campus protests began to grate at him. He opposed the fiery calls to shut down universities. The experience influenced his scholarship as well. "I began to wonder why the Left always fails in America," he says. "Why has there been no serious radical movement with political success?" He started to study and publish on the activities of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). His work came to the attention of the historian Theodore Draper, who shared his research notes and encouraged Klehr to write *The Heyday of American Communism*, which focuses on the 1930s. It came out in 1984, his first major book. By that time, Klehr was thinking of himself as a neoconservative. He had voted for George McGovern in 1972, Jimmy Carter in 1976, and then Ronald Reagan in 1980.

Shortly before Reagan's election, Klehr met Haynes at an academic conference in Duluth, Minn. Haynes had attended Florida State University, where he discovered his interest in labor history—an interest that took him north, to the University of Minnesota, for graduate school. He considered himself a socialist, and felt the tug of Democratic politics. First he joined the presidential campaign of Hubert Humphrey, in 1968. Later, he worked for a series of Minnesota Democrats in St. Paul and Washington, D.C. All the while, he toiled away on his Ph.D. dissertation, on Communism in Minnesota. "I used to hear the old Humphrey people talk about how they had run the Reds out of the party in 1948," he says. "I didn't believe them at first because I didn't think there were any Reds to run out. Then I looked at the documentary evidence, which nobody else was doing, and it proved them right: There were a lot of Communists back then." Like Klehr, Haynes considered himself a Democrat until the Carter presidency.

The pair hit it off in Duluth. "It was immediately clear that our views were compatible," says Haynes. At a time when plenty of academic and media elites still swore that Hiss was a victim of lies pushed by a psychologically disturbed Whittaker Chambers—rather than a spy who was exposed by a remorseful ex-Communist—Haynes and Klehr agreed on several controversial questions. They believed Communists were active in U.S. politics in the 1930s and 1940s, often in a clandestine way. They also thought that the CPUSA took its cues from the Kremlin. Many of their fellow-traveling peers disagreed. They claimed that the CPUSA was an expression of a home-grown radicalism whose roots lay in the ideals of the American Revolution.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED





EVENTUALLY, Haynes and Klehr decided to join forces. Their first book, *The American Communist Movement* (1992), put them squarely on the side of "traditionalists" who believed the threat of domestic Communism was real, as opposed to "revisionists" who embodied anti-anti-Communism. Despite this distinction, Haynes and Klehr made an important concession: "In practice few American Communists were spies," they wrote, and "espionage was not a regular activity of the [CPUSA]." The historical record, and their devotion to it, wouldn't let them say more. But they soon changed their minds. As they would write a few years later: "The CPUSA was indeed a fifth column working inside and against the United States in the Cold War."

Their second thoughts arrived just as that first book was rolling off the printing press. The fall of the Soviet Union led to the opening of Russian archives that contained a mountain of documents on the activities of the CPUSA. Haynes and Klehr made trips to Moscow to mine this fresh material. Haynes had to spend his vacation time to do it. The result was *The Secret World of American Communism* (1995), co-authored by Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov. It became one of those rare books whose content is the subject of news stories in advance of book reviews. The CPUSA, it revealed, was deeply involved in espionage throughout its history. The book also showed that John Reed (author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*) and Edmund Stevens (a Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist) received payoffs from Moscow. Haynes, Klehr, and Firsov didn't merely summarize their discoveries. They reprinted the documents in translation. It was impossible to read their volume and maintain that members of the CPUSA were starry-eyed innocents who leaned a little farther to the left than ordinary liberals.

One of their readers was Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the late Democratic senator from New York. He wanted Congress to review secrecy laws in the wake of the Cold War and sought expert testimony. At a hearing in 1995, Haynes and Klehr described the paradox of having better access to national-security records in the former Soviet Union than in their own country. Moynihan turned to CIA director John Deutch, who was at the hearing, and asked him to look into the matter. Two months later, at a press conference attended by Deutch, Moynihan, and Haynes, the government released a batch of messages from the Venona Project, a top-secret effort to decrypt Soviet cable traffic between Washington and Moscow in the 1940s. One immediate revelation involved Julius Rosenberg. The documents showed that he was without question a Soviet spy—contradicting the assertions of leftists who had viewed him as a martyr of anti-Communist hysteria. Over the next two years, the National Security Agency made available nearly 3,000 more deciphered messages. Haynes and Klehr went on to publish *Venona* (1999), their summary and interpretation of what it all meant.

While they were writing about dead drops, many leftists wanted them to drop dead. William Kunstler, the radical lawyer, demanded that the Venona messages be treated as forgeries. Ellen Schrecker of Yeshiva University and Maurice Isserman of Hamilton College condemned Haynes and Klehr for accepting grant support from conservative foundations and taking part in "a broader campaign to delegitimize the academy." The academics were in fact doing a pretty good job of delegitimizing themselves. As each new book by Haynes and Klehr came out, revisionist detractors sounded more desperate. Schrecker once claimed that America's fifth columnists weren't traitors to their country. Instead, they were "internationalists" who "did not subscribe to traditional forms of patriotism."

Haynes and Klehr responded to such moral equivalence with *In Denial* (2003), a brief against historians who insisted on lying about spying. It felt like a coda—a final, score-settling statement by Haynes and Klehr on what they'd learned about their chosen field. As it happened, however, they weren't yet done.

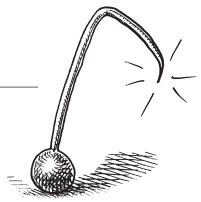
In 2005, Haynes received an e-mail from Alexander Vassiliev, a former KGB officer who was living in London. Vassiliev had previously worked with Allen Weinstein on *The Haunted Wood*, a book about espionage during the Stalin era. But he also owned a set of notebooks that nobody else had seen before—1,115 pages of transcriptions of material Vassiliev had looked up in the KGB archives, when they were still open to him. For years, he had stashed the notebooks in Russia, fearing confiscation if he tried to remove them from the country. Eventually, he had them shipped out by DHL. Vassiliev invited Haynes and Klehr to check them out. They flew over about a week later. "We quickly saw the chance to write a more detailed portrait of Soviet intelligence than was ever before available," says Klehr.

They started work on *Spies* right away. Haynes, the meticulous librarian, created a concordance so that he and Klehr could keep their footing amid the proliferating number of aliases and secret identities in a growing pile of source documents on Soviet espionage. Klehr began drafting chapters. Vassiliev offered his own insights, translations, and corrections. The three men also convened a small group of historians and national-security experts to authenticate the notebooks and function as peer reviewers.

The book's section on atomic spy Russell McNutt—one of the most important disclosures in *Spies*—takes up only a few pages, and Klehr's call to him only a sentence. "His wife answered the phone," remembers Klehr. "She told me that he had good days and bad days. He came on and admitted to knowing Julius Rosenberg, but he didn't answer my question about whether he had passed classified information to the Soviets through Rosenberg." Instead, McNutt asked Klehr to identify himself. Klehr promised to mail *Venona* and call back. When they connected a few weeks later, McNutt wouldn't acknowledge even receiving the book. They didn't speak again, and McNutt died last year. Members of his family insist that he didn't spy, though they offer no exculpatory evidence. "Maybe he really couldn't remember," says Klehr. "Or maybe he just didn't want to."

Today, thanks to the efforts of Haynes and Klehr, forgetting about the Soviet Union's spies and their treachery is no longer an option. **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The Bent Pin

BY FLORENCE KING

With Liberty and Pug Noses for All

You have to learn to crawl before you can walk over hot coals. Our present love affair with diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism got its training wheels in the early '70s when the melting pot boiled over and Ethnic Awareness hit the fan.

It was a total rejection of *E pluribus unum*, our original version of inclusion whereby vastly different peoples pledged to the same ideals, language, and customs were to be gradually melded into a national type. Less loftily known as "Americanization," the melding process eventually took on a cookie-cutter aspect that offended the obsessive individuality enshrined by the '60s. Worse, the cookie in question was none other than that archenemy of progressives and hippies, the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. This was the "real American" that foreign-born parents had urged their children to copy, so their descendants declared war on WASPs and the Ethnic Awareness Movement began.

It was marked by the usual cluster of T-shirts, bumper stickers, coffee mugs, and lapel buttons reading "Kiss Me, I'm Italian," "Have You Hugged a Greek Today?" and "Czech Mate!" Novelists had a field day. In *Any Minute I Can Split*, Judith Rossner wrote, "WASPs were born toilet-trained," and in *Goodbye, Columbus*, Philip Roth called us "those pug-nosed little bastards from Montclair." In movies and miniseries, an aging Ray Milland forged a new career as the WASP father from Hell. Serious scholars had a go at us as well. In *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*, Michael Novak penned the unforgettable line: "The innocence of Johnny Carson's face insults the night." (That pug nose will do it every time.) There was no end to the awareness of the newly aware. They related wrenching stories of childhood trauma and psychological scarring caused by having a name that ended in a vowel, and blamed "Anglo-Saxon repression" for everybody's sex problems, including their own.

The Ethnic Awareness Movement set out to destroy WASP hegemony. In that it succeeded, but like most of our idealistic movements this one was fraught with unintended consequences. Now, for the first time, one offshoot of the Old World was the same as another. At last we were all Europeans together—i.e., all whites. Add the Founding Father mental picture triggered by those longstanding collective put-downs, "dead white men" and "white male patriarchy," and we see that "white" and "WASP" have become virtually synonymous. Consider the protest sign recently seen at an Hispanic demonstration: "Who Are You Calling Immigrant, Pilgrim?" There it is: Anybody who is against Hispanic immigration must have a name ending in a consonant—like Bradford, Hopkins, Alden, Winslow, Standish. You don't get passenger lists like this on any old ship, but now that a European is a white is a WASP, you do.

To liven up the unintended consequences we now have a Pilgrim-in-Chief. Lou Dobbs is evidently a WASP and looks it, but it doesn't end there because he bears a striking resemblance in looks and manner to the all-time Movie WASP, the ubiquitous character actor Gene Lockhart, he of the pug nose whose daughter was also in the movies and had the same nose. Lockhart was in so many movies of the '30s and '40s that it would be easier to list those he was not in. He played Stephen Douglas in *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*; Custer's father-in-law in *They Died with Their Boots On*; the judge in *Miracle on 34th Street*—indeed, the judge in just about everything, as well as the mayor, the banker, the factory owner, the pillar of the church, and the town's leading citizen, ever given to the hrummphing pomposity that goes with vests and pocket watches on heavy chains. He was so WASPy that even when he stepped out of character and played the poor, browbeaten Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol* he came across as a middle-class suburban WASP, the ultimate white-collar family man pushing Scrooge's papers. The dual image of Lou Dobbs and Gene Lockhart has obliterated Ethnic Awareness and revived awareness of ethnics.

One wouldn't expect the Obama administration to supply America with a Gene Lockhart WASP, but it has. White House press chief Robert Gibbs, he of the rimless glasses and educated Southern accent, is straight out of a black-and-white photo in a history book. A McKinley cabinet member, a Taft cabinet member, a Hoover cabinet member. It doesn't matter which as long as it's an official black-and-white photo of a cabinet: all males, all in black suits, waistcoats, and stiff high collars, all with their legs crossed in the same direction, all with buttoned shoes showing, because Gibbs belongs in a pre–New Deal gallery of "real Americans" posing for an official cabinet photo. *The Last Cabinet*, starring Gene Lockhart.

Between Dobbs and Gibbs, America is saturated with Gene Lockhart WASPiness. One or the other is always on TV, but that doesn't mean that WASP hegemony is back. On the contrary, our shrinking world has gotten so small that the possibilities for universal sameness are now bigger and better than ever. The Family of Man has hit the multicultural jackpot and raised inclusion to the nth degree. If you don't believe me, get out your almanacs, turn to Flags of the World, and check out the flag of Somalia. It's very simple, just a blue field with one white star in the middle. Look familiar? No? It happens to be alike in every detail to another flag, one that inspired a song, and I don't mean the Somali national anthem. Still don't know? Okay, be quiet while I sing:

First gallant South Carolina nobly made the stand,
Then came Alabama who took her by the hand,
Then quickly Mississippi, Georgia, and Florida
All raised on high the Bonnie Blue Flag
That bears a single star!

NR

Florence King can be reached at P.O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, VA 22404.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Long View

BY ROB LONG

From the Iranian airwaves . . .

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT:
The McKhameini Group

[SFX: Martial theme music]

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Issue One! The Tehran-around! After last week's inconclusive and murky election for the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, both Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Mir-Hossein Mousavi have claimed victory. Unruly mobs have gathered in the streets, rioting has taken place, and there's a growing sense that the current administration is losing its grip. Question: How long will it take the Islamic Republic to heal these civic wounds? I ask you, Ayatollah Ali Azadi, chief religious correspondent for the *Bandar-e-Abbas Times*.

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: How long? Hard to say, Ahmad. There's a lot that needs to be done. First, we must reassert control over the streets and the people. Then, we must chop off the hands of the protesters. Then, we must behead Mousavi and upload the videotape to YouTube. Only after that can the people using illegal Internet access be burned alive in the public square.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: And then the healing starts?

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: Exactly. Thereabouts.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Is this correct? I ask you, Irshad Yazd, women's columnist for the Hamadan News Service.

IRSHAD YAZD: Mmmm, hmmm brrrrrn hmmmmm hummmm mmmmmm, wammmmm mrrrrp brrrrn.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Hard to understand from underneath the headdress, but I'm going to go with "yes."

KALEMEH CHEGINI: I think she said that it will take barely six days, and that by the seventh day the country will rally behind Mr. Ahmadinejad.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: How could you make out what she said?

KALEMEH CHEGINI: The TV studio lights are so bright, I can just make out the outline of her face through the black cloth, and I happen to be able to lip-read.

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: The brazen whore is correct. It will take six days. She will have to be stoned to death, though, for her promiscuous use of too-thin black cloth and thereby encouraging prostitution.

IRSHAD YAZD: Mmmmm hmpppp, mmmmmrrrrp frrrrppp!

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Issue Two! Hanging chador! As voters struggle to reconcile themselves with the orders of the Guardian Council, recounts are going on in various provinces around the country. Scrutiny is particularly acute in the southern beach provinces around Bushehr. Question: Were voting irregularities there enough to tip the scales to Ahmadinejad? I ask you, Reza Karroubi, chief political analyst for IranNN.

REZA KARROUBI: Look, Ahmad, let's be honest. The provinces that we're talking about here—in and around Bushehr, Shiraz, maybe up to Chongha Zabil—these are pretty much backwaters. I think, honestly, that people just didn't understand the ballots down there. A lot of them are elderly, moved down that way years ago to enjoy the Gulf lifestyle and get away from the craziness of the cities, and I think they looked at the confusing ballot and simply miscast their vote.

IRSHAD YAZD: Kkrrrrmmmm trp, mmmrt grrrnnn zp.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Silence, whore.

KALEMEH CHEGINI: I disagree. Look, the farther south you go in this country, the greater the appetite for reform. Voters look at places like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and think, "Maybe liberal places like that have the right idea."

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: Who says that? What are their names? They must be put to death immediately.

KALEMEH CHEGINI: I'm talking about the poll data. It's really very conclusive.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Exit Question! One a scale of one to ten—one being absolutely impossible, something along the lines of me becoming a rabbi and directing a Tehran High School of the Performing Arts production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and ten meaning metaphysical certitude, along the lines of the Netherlands becoming an Islamic Republic—how likely is it that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is president of Iran in six months? Reza?

REZA KARROUBI: The situation in the south is iffy. The people along the northern border don't like him. He's got the cities and the big unions. But that might not be enough. I'm giving him a six.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Kalemeh "the Dilemma" Chegini?

KALEMEH CHEGINI: Reza is wrong. It's barely a five.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: A five?

KALEMEH CHEGINI: Look, the whole world is against him. What's he going to do? Use a nuclear weapon?

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: You got it! What do we have them for, anyway? Turn Tabriz into glass if that's what it takes.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: But we're saving those bombs for Israel.

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: We can make more! Look, Ahmad, we're struggling here for the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic, and its ability to survive this election madness. Nowhere in the Koran does it say that your vote can override the supreme leader's. Nowhere in the Koran does it say that each province gets to conduct by-hand recounts using different standards and without any guidance from the Islamic courts.

KALEMEH CHEGINI: So you're against any hand recounts?

AYATOLLAH ALI AZADI: If it were up to me, those guys calling for hand recounts wouldn't have hands to count with. The answer, Ahmad, is nine.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: You're both wrong. The answer is seven.

IRSHAD YAZD: Kkkkrrtttt, yrpp mrst hmmmm.

AHMAD McKHAMEINI: Silence, whore. Bye-bye!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Dark Lord

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

BYRON has his memorial among the honored national poets in Westminster Abbey. How this would horrify him! He mocked fame and society, and accused everyone respectable or ordinary of cant and hypocrisy. A cynic through and through, he particularly loathed enthusiasm of any kind, or "entusymusy," as he called it. It amused him to think of poetry as "poeshie" or even "brain-money," and he downgraded *Don Juan*, his masterpiece, into "Donny Jonny." Southey, the poet laureate of the day, was the butt of Byron's satire at its most savage; Keats, he thought, wrote "piss-a-bed" stuff; and "Turdsworth" was his name for Wordsworth. His own life was short, dissolute, and ultimately broken—a cautionary tale of how not to live. Yet to read him is still to be struck by the ease of his writing, its conversational tone and immediacy, the unexpected and unforced rhyming of his poetry, and the brilliance—no other word is right—of his enormous correspondence. Indisputably this casual monster had his share of genius.

There was one thing he took seriously, however, and that was his rank. In letters to anyone who might be mistaken on the matter, the profession "peer of England" appeared under his signature. A capital B with a coronet adorned his bed. Byron assembled a group of friends with whom he kept in touch all his life, and one of them was John Cam Hobhouse. When these two went on their travels in 1809, Hobhouse reported, Byron "gave me a lecture about not caring enough for the English nobility."

It was Byron's good fortune to have been born in 1788, at a moment when England was on the threshold of riches and imperial power, and a British peer could take for granted the respect of the rest of the world. Byron was ten when he inherited his title, as well as Newstead Abbey, a huge but dilapidated house and 3,000 acres near Nottingham, and a property in Lancashire with valuable coal mines. The outward show was misleading: The Byrons had "bad blood," in a phrase of the era. The previous Lord Byron, the poet's great-uncle, had murdered his neighbor at Newstead in the course of a quarrel about how to hang game. The poet's father married for money, destroyed his wife's fortune, and died alone in poverty and exile. Byron never knew his father, and was brought up by a fond, feckless, and financially ruined mother.

Another in the group of close friends was the Irish poet Tom Moore, and he wrote the first biography, deliberately out to romanticize whatever had gone wrong. Reviewing it in 1831, Macaulay, the historian, wrestled with the paradox that a man as gifted as Byron should have had "so dark and sad a story. . . . He was truly a spoiled child, not merely the spoiled child of his parent, but the spoiled child of nature, the spoiled child of fortune, the spoiled child of fame, the spoiled child of society." Intellectual power and moral depravity combined in him to produce a system of ethics, Macaulay judged, "in which the two great commandments were, to hate your neighbor and love your neighbor's wife."

This spoiled Byron never questioned his privilege to do as he pleased, and everyone he encountered was to defer to him. He resisted formal education, learning at Cambridge only how to strike a pose, for instance by having a tame bear as a pet. At the time he could write, "I consider myself as destined never to be happy, although in some instances fortunate. I am an isolated Being on the Earth, without a Tie to attach me to life." Here was the self-dramatization characteristic of the whole Romantic movement then captivating Europe. His adult life was to prove an obsessive sexual experiment with men and women. "I am tolerably sick of vice, which I have tried in its agreeable varieties," he was to confide in one of his letters. At age 23, he could inform Hobhouse that he had already, on his travels, "had a number of Greek and Turkish women, and I believe the rest of the English were equally lucky, for we were all *clapped*."

London society and the press were soon to resound with the scandal gathering around him. "I will never live in England if I can avoid it. *Why*—that must remain a secret," he wrote to his man of business. According to modern biographers, all this hints at a homosexual relationship with a choirboy in the university whom Byron claimed to have met there every day. A suggestive letter to a friend mentions that he was writing a treatise titled "Sodomy simplified or Paederasty proved to be praiseworthy from ancient authors and modern practice." A good-looking page, Robert Rushton, accompanied him on a number of journeys, and in Greece at the end of his life Byron spoke and wrote of his unrequited love for a 15-year-old Greek boy to whom he was to bequeath money.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, published in 1812, was the long poem inspired by Byron's journeying in the Ottoman Empire, especially Greece. Byron recorded that he awoke to find himself famous. One line in it, "I have not loved the world, nor the world me," again summarizes Romanticism, and Byron himself affirmed that "the poem hit the taste of the age." In 1814, his new long poem *The Corsair* sold 10,000 copies in a single day, and seven editions in four weeks. The blend of melancholy, bravado, and exotic storytelling gave Byron the sort of international celebrity that film stars and pop musicians enjoy today. Madame de Staël in Switzerland, Pushkin in Moscow, the Frenchmen Stendhal and Lamartine—all read him with admiration. Schumann was to burst into tears at a reading of one of Byron's later plays. Mazzini acknowledged his genius. "Byronic" became an adjective recognizable internationally. In Weimar, Goethe, the most eminent literary man of the period, was almost alone in singling out critically Byron's political radicalism: "Lord Byron is only great as a poet; as soon as he reflects he is a child."

Suddenly London was full of hostesses inviting Byron, and young women throwing themselves in paroxysms at his feet. Among the latter was Lady Caroline Lamb, the wife of William Lamb, later Lord Melbourne and prime minister. Passionate and unbalanced enough to stab herself with a penknife and to send Byron some of her pubic hair, she nonetheless earned immortality with her description of him as "mad—bad—and dangerous to know."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

While coping with Lady Caroline, he was having an affair with Augusta, his half-sister four years older than he. The daughter of Byron's father by a previous marriage, she was the wife of a somewhat colorless Colonel Leigh. Long after Byron and Augusta were both dead, her daughter, Medora Leigh, continued to assert that Byron was her real father. As though his love life were not complicated enough, Byron decided to marry yet another young woman, Annabella Milbanke. Far from courting her, he seems to have been brutally inconsiderate. The story goes that he did not speak to her in the carriage taking them on their honeymoon, and that he ravished her on a sofa and then told her to find another bedroom as he did not want her to see his deformed foot. A few days after his wedding, he could write to his confidante Lady Melbourne—the mother-in-law of the now-rejected Lady Caroline, and also a relation of Annabella—"I got a wife and a cold on the same day—but have got rid of the last pretty speedily."

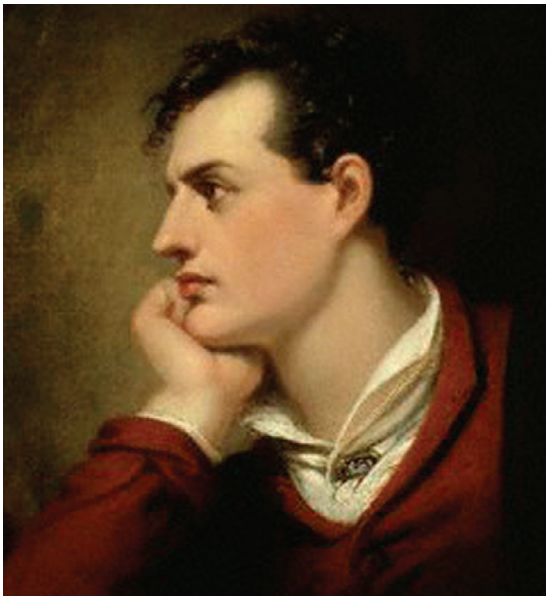
A year or so of marriage, and the birth of a child, was enough for Annabella, who walked out without warning, the first person ever to stand up to Byron. For the rest of their lives, Augusta and Annabella obfuscated whatever had really happened, but it was generally believed that Byron had committed incest with Augusta and had forcibly sodomized Annabella, which explained her leaving him so abruptly. Ostracized, condemned where previously he had been applauded, he tried to recover by writing his memoirs, and these were presumably confessional. His friends, including Tom Moore, Hobhouse, and the publisher John Murray, are known to have read them. In a notorious act of literary vandalism that points to a conspiracy to protect Byron, they burned the manuscript. Edna O'Brien, the novelist, is the latest author to examine the available evidence, in her new and objective book, *Byron in Love: A Short Daring Life* (Norton, 256 pp., $24.95); and her conclusion is also that the charges of incest and forcible sodomy are justified.

"I was born for opposition," Byron said and may well have believed, but he was standing on the privilege of being an English peer only to pose as though he were no such thing. His radical politics were all of a piece with his sexual license. Living through the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars that followed it, he declared himself a Jacobin and sighed for a republic. He took advantage of his hereditary seat in the House of Lords to speak for men so frightened of the Industrial Revolution that they were engaged in breaking machinery—an ignorant mob, of course, rather than real rebels. In poems and epigrams, he incessantly ridiculed favorite hate-figures of his, such as the Prince Regent and the foreign minister, Lord Castlereagh. The "freedom" for which he was agitating so strongly remained conveniently abstract, a mere slogan. Bertrand Russell, of all philosophers, pointed out that Byron's concept of freedom was the same as that of a German prince or a Cherokee chief: the pleasure of doing as one pleases and not having to account for it.

In the course of the prolonged struggle between the nations, Napoleon could have destroyed conservative England, and this was Byron's wish. In the days leading up to the decisive battle of Waterloo, Byron was writing of Napoleon, "All seems against him; but I believe and hope he will win." British victory then made Byron "damned sorry." *Don Juan* has a sarcastic couplet addressed to the Duke of Wellington, victor in that battle: "And I shall be delighted to learn who, / Save you and yours, have gained by Waterloo?" That poem characteristically makes fun of Wellington's nose as the hook on which to hang the whole of Europe. Wellington, the archetypal high Tory, repaid Byron with some finality: "There never existed a more worthless set than Byron and his friends, for example—poets praise fine sentiments and never practice them." Revealingly, Byron ordered a copy of Napoleon's traveling coach, costing £500, an immense sum at the time. Adopting the name Noel for financial reasons, he took to signing himself "NB," the initials he shared with his hero.

In 1816, Byron left England in a swirl of gossip, controversy, and disgrace; and he was never to return. First in Switzerland, then in Italy, he played the Milord on a permanent Grand Tour. At times, debauchery appeared his sole purpose. One of the women who threw themselves at him was Claire Clairmont, of whom he wrote: "A man is a man—& if a girl of eighteen comes prancing to you at all hours—there is but one way. . . . The next question is, is the brat mine?" In two years in Venice, he confided to a friend, he had spent £5,000, more than half of it laid out on women: "I have had plenty for the money, that's certain—I think at least two hundred of one sort or another—perhaps more, for I have not lately kept the recount." "In Italia mille tre" was the boast of Mozart's Don Giovanni.

Reassembling on the Continent, the set of friends now included Shelley, a genuine rebel. Admiring Byron, he also observed in him the "canker of aristocracy," evident in the daily circus of Byron's numerous servants, his ten horses, and his menagerie of dogs, cats, and birds. Building a boat in emulation of Byron, Shelley set sail in a storm and was drowned, paying the price, like so many others, for having been caught up in Byron's life. In a scene that ever after symbolized the Romantic age, a



Lord Byron

RICHARD WESTALL (1813)

funeral pyre was lit on the beach for Shelley's washed-up corpse, whereupon Byron wandered away and swam out to his own yacht, in the water for so long that he became sunburned. His mistress saved a piece of his blistered skin.

In Italy, Byron was one day introduced (though in French) to Countess Teresa Guiccioli as "a peer of England and its greatest poet." She was yet another neighbor's wife to be seduced and she too was unable to hold him. Revolution against Austrian occupation and Bourbon local rulers was in the air. Imagining that his idea of freedom was coming true, he went out riding in the woods with loaded pistols and a sword, met up there with would-be revolutionaries, offered them money, and arranged for them to stack arms in the country house of Teresa and her husband. The despised authorities had no trouble

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dispersing these amateurs and moving Byron away.

Back in London, the Greek Committee was established to fight for Greece's independence from the Ottomans. Here was a more rewarding cause than anything in Italy or South America, where Byron also thought of venturing. Several of his friends were members of this committee, and they arranged for him to be their official agent in Greece, well aware of the publicity he was bound to attract. He spent a fortune on specially designed helmets and uniforms, and on the costs of the voyage. Eventually he established himself on the Greek mainland at Missolonghi, more a mud-patch than a proper town.

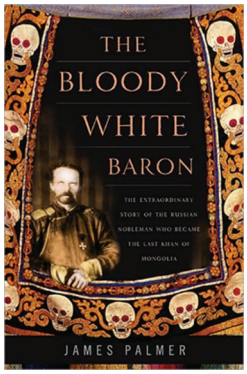
There he subsidized Greeks and wild Albanians, irregulars who valued his money far more than freedom. He imagined himself at the head of Byron's Brigade, leading a charge and driving the Turks out. Reality overtook this fantasy when he caught some sort of fever and suffered mysterious and fatal convulsions. A lonely and untimely death followed; he was only 36.

The Greek Committee and his friends were quick to build the legend that Byron had sacrificed himself in the cause of Greek independence, a hero and a martyr for the sacred ideal of freedom. So he entered history. Nationalists everywhere have perceived him as a model. A Communist leader in the Spanish Civil War asked for a poet as famous as Byron to come forward and volunteer to die for that cause.

Successive generations ever since have accepted the Byronic myth in full. Byron opened the way for men and women everywhere to indulge in whatever they like without moral judgment or acceptance of responsibility. Conduct that was once offensive has become commonplace. The outrage and destructiveness that surged around Byron have long dissolved into a sense that his poetry is a full and complete justification of the man. Radical politics like his have become a standard intellectual property, and transgression in personal relations and matters of art is considered perfectly normal, altogether in the order of things. Where once this singular English peer staggered the world by abusing the privileges of his class and his times, now innumerable demotic copycat Byrons feel born to opposition of their society, and they too have no idea that they are spoiled, abusing the very things that have protected them and made them what they are. NR

Heart of Darkness

ANDREW STUTTAFORD



The Bloody White Baron: The Extraordinary Story of the Russian Nobleman Who Became the Last Khan of Mongolia, by James Palmer (Basic, 288 pp., $26.95)

To find even a quick allusion to the White Russian civil-war commander Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg (1886–1921) is to be pulled into a past too strange to be believable and too terrible not to be. Three years ago, I was working on an article on Mongolia for NATIONAL REVIEW. When the text I'd submitted for editing was returned, a reference to the country's "brief, brutal, and bizarre rule [by] a crazed Baltic baron" was questioned: "Are you certain about this?" As James Palmer's absorbing, wonderfully written new biography of this gargoyle khan, exterminationist anti-Semite, paranoid mystic, and (some thought) reincarnated god shows, when it comes to Ungern, certainty has a way of vanishing into myth, rumor, and whispered campfire tale: There is much about the baron that remains, in Palmer's perfect adjective, "elusive."

An earlier, and profoundly influential, biographer (of sorts), the Franco-Russian Communist Vladimir Pozner, came to the same conclusion (Ungern "kept on escaping me") but took a different tack in response. His *Bloody Baron* (1938) openly blended fact with fiction and, more surreptitiously, well-crafted Soviet propaganda, to recreate the baroquely cruel baron of legend—but not just legend. There was indeed an Ungern, a killer, a torturer, a burner-alive, who battled the Bolsheviks with a heedless bravery and primitive ferocity so devastating that he was able to turn a corner of Siberia into a charnel-house realm all his own. And yes, he later did the same with a swathe of Mongolia that he transformed into an anticipation of Babi Yar and a reminder of Genghis.

But that was not enough for Pozner. His baron is, almost, a creature of nightmare seemingly lurking in the thin space between reality and the darker side of the human imagination, yet not without a certain atavistic grandeur that was, in fact, entirely lacking from Ungern's shabby, psychotic, ragtag crusade: "From a distance came a call of trumpets. The street filled with Ungern's squadrons, riding slowly. The Baron leant out of the window. A stream of horsemen flowed along the roadway. On their shoulder-straps two-headed eagles were foreshortened: legions of silver eagles ready to wing northwards."

This is the baron who can be glimpsed in comic book (in one of Hugo Pratt's *Corto Maltese* series), in video game (*Iron Storm*), and even in the lyrics of "Ungern-Sternberg," a song by French punk rockers Paris Violence: "Ungern-Sternberg, chevalier romantique / Tu attends la mort comme un amant sa promise . . ." ("Ungern-Sternberg, romantic knight / You wait for death like a lover . . .")

Faced with, and fascinated by, epic monstrosity, we—as a species—seem disturbingly willing to keep ourselves at a comfortable emotional and intellectual distance from its deeper, even more hideous implications. In *The Bloody White Baron*, Palmer does not hold back from detailing the horrors (this is not a book for the faint-hearted) for which that *chevalier romantique* was responsible, but he does so clinically, analytically, immune to their dark spell: "Ungern's sadism . . . was appalling and inexcusable, but also explicable. The obsession with . . . whipping was an exaggerated version of the discipline of the old Russian imperial army, where fifty lashes were considered a light punishment. Ungern favored 'a hundred blows to each part of the body.' . . . 'Did you know,' he mused, 'that men can still walk when the flesh and bone are separated?'"

By contrast, when Ungern makes an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appearance in *Buddha's Little Finger*, a 1996 novel by the Russian writer Victor Pelevin, it is as the stern, laconic guardian of an infinite, coldly beautiful Valhalla, and if anything, an oddly admirable figure. Of the maniac there is barely a suggestion; of the *chevalier romantique*, there is all too much.

It's no surprise that the other two best-known biographical accounts of the baron are themselves "elusive." In *Beasts, Men and Gods* (1922), Ferdinand Ossendowski, a Polish adventurer, writer, and Munchausen detained by the baron in Urga (today's Ulaanbaatar), paints a vivid portrait of a soldier lost to mysticism, madness, and massacre, a warlord startlingly reminiscent of *Apocalypse Now*'s Colonel Kurtz. Ossendowski's accuracy is as disputed as the role he came to play in Ungern's entourage, and Palmer jeers that the Pole "was not always the most reliable of storytellers." No, he was not; but—notwithstanding Palmer's use of an impressive range of archival material—Ossendowski's flawed, sometimes fantastical yarn remains a significant, and unavoidable, influence on this latest biography of a man who seemed to relish the speculation he provoked: "My name is surrounded with such hate and fear that no one can judge what is the truth and what is false, what is history and what myth." Naturally, the source for that quotation is Ossendowski.

There's more than a trace of Ossendowski in Dmitri Alioshin's *Asian Odyssey* (1940), a memoir by one of Ungern's veterans, and another major (possibly even reasonably accurate) resource for Palmer. Typically for some of Ungern's earlier chroniclers, little is known about Alioshin: We cannot even be sure that that was his real name. This lurid, frequently stomach-churning volume is also, if unintentionally, a revealing account of its author's own moral disintegration: "A few days later we caught a Bolshevik commissar, a former army officer. We tied him to a pole and marched a detachment past him. Each man struck him as hard as he could in the face. He died in fifteen minutes. The next commissar we caught was beaten to death with a *nagaika*, a strong army whip which tears the flesh from the bones."

Note the echo of Ungern's obsessions. Note too that "we": The once-idealistic officer was descending into barbarism, a process that ground on as the young Russian's odyssey unfolded on its dreadful course. Tragically, his was a story not so different from that of many others swept into the maelstrom of an empire collapsing into revolution, ruin, and civil war of an atrocity that might have shocked even Hobbes. It's also a story that helps us peer deeper into the abyss into which Ungern so ecstatically jumped.

But unlike Alioshin, Ungern did not have to fall so very far to leave civilization behind. The baron may have been the scion of one of those ancient German families that retained their hold over Russia's Baltic provinces until almost the last days of the czars, but arguably the most important thing he inherited from his forebears was a streak of insanity. Violent, charmless, impulsive, and uncontrollable, the baron, as Palmer demonstrates, was from the beginning a Junker amok, *noblesse* with no hint of *oblige*. He made a nonsense of his education, and his career in the imperial army was a stop-go fiasco redeemed, and then only partly, by World War I.

It was the Bolshevik revolution that finally gave Ungern his chance to shine, if that's the word. Within months of Lenin's coup, the baron's bravery, energy, and fanatical opposition to a new order that he believed to be literally demonic had allowed him to carve out a prominent role in the White forces ranged against the Red Army in Siberia's Transbaikalia. Russia's Calvary was Ungern's opportunity. Like Conrad's Mr. Kurtz in the *Heart of Darkness* on which *Apocalypse Now* was modeled, the baron had "immense plans": He dreamt of building a great Asiatic empire as bulwark and spearhead against the revolutionaries (and anyone else) who "threaten[ed] the Divine Spirit" in mankind. And like Conrad's Kurtz, Ungern appears to have been beguiled, emboldened, and inspired by the wilderness in which he found himself, far from home, far from convention, far from conscience.

Palmer deftly and briskly (this is not a long book) guides his readers through a conflict that raged throughout southeast Siberia and, ultimately, Mongolia. Given the remoteness of time and place, not to mention the bewildering range of characters, factions, and causes, Palmer's success in telling this tale as clearly as he does is no small achievement. More than that, he brilliantly conveys a sense of the savagery, scope, and strangeness of this war, a war of telegraphy and sorcery, a war at the intersection of ancient and modern, of European and Asian, a war fought in a distant ghastly nowhere, a blood-drenched free-for-all where the most effective forces included huge armored trains, mounted cavalry, and lethal squads of Tibetan dobdobs, "monk-enforcers, their clothes lightly smeared with butter and their faces painted with soot to strike fear into the enemies of the faith."

Given the remoteness of time and place, not to mention the bewildering range of characters, factions, and causes, James Palmer's success in telling this tale as clearly as he does is no small achievement.

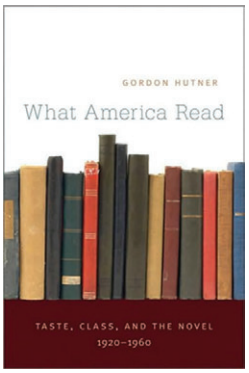
But of all the images that crowd this evocative book, there is none more haunting than one that Palmer borrows from Alioshin, a description of Ungern leading his troops during their final retreat: "[He] rode silently with bowed head in front of the column. [He] had lost his hat and most of his clothes. On his naked chest numerous Mongolian talismans and charms hung on a bright yellow cord. He looked like the reincarnation of a prehistoric ape-man. People were afraid to look at him."

And so they should have been—but as much for what Ungern says about all of us as for what he might have done to them. **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Grandma Read

TERRY TEACHOUT



What America Read: Taste, Class, and the Novel, 1920–1960, by Gordon Hutner (North Carolina, 432 pp., $39.95)

THE parlors of small-town America are full of novels that made their way onto the best-seller lists once upon a time. Some were dismissed as commercial trash by the critics of their day, but others were taken seriously and written about earnestly. Many were Books of the Month, and a few won Pulitzer Prizes. Now they gather dust in the unused front rooms of homes whose owners have moved the TV to a friendlier part of the house. Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent*, Laura Z. Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement*, Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, Edna Ferber's *So Big*, Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit*: These books, like their authors, dropped off the scope long ago. Hardly anyone reads them today, not even literary scholars.

Hardly anyone, that is, except for Gordon Hutner, a professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who has made a career out of studying American fiction and its place in our culture. Now he's written a history of the novels that your grandparents loved, and his book, very much to my surprise, turns out to be both respectful and—up to a point—admiring. While it isn't exactly the book I wanted to read or would have written, Hutner covers a great deal of ground with a good deal of clarity, and his book deserves to be read with close attention by anyone interested in the reading habits of the American public.

The title, however, isn't quite accurate, for *What America Read* is not a history of the American bestseller, and it passes over genre fiction: Dashiell Hammett, Zane Grey, and the decorously sexy bodice-rippers of an earlier era are nowhere to be found in its pages. Instead Hutner is interested in what used to be called "better fiction" and what he himself calls the "middle-class realistic novel." That phrase may be clunky, but it gets to the point. A vast expanse of literary terrain separates *Finnegans Wake* from *Love's Savage Fury*, and much of it is occupied by novels about more or less ordinary people whose daily lives, allowing for differences of time and place, are not unlike yours or mine. Rarely do they have occasion to inherit fortunes, commit mass murder, or employ private detectives. Instead these not-so-imaginary people get married, raise families, and go to work each morning, and sometimes they also go to war.

Theirs, in short, is the common fate of the American middle class, and it is a truth universally acknowledged that many middle-class readers enjoy reading novels about their own kind, not merely for entertainment but also as an act of self-discovery. To read a novel about a character whose experiences are similar to your own is to be reassured that your experiences are not abnormal—and, just as important, to learn how other people have coped with these experiences.

Such novels have more in common than their subject matter. They are almost always straightforwardly written—you will find no hint of stylistic caprice in their workmanlike prose—and meticulously plotted. One reads them first and foremost to find out what happens to the characters. Everything else is secondary, which is not to say unimportant: A realistic novel can be witty, thoughtful, politically committed, even rich in spiritual or philosophical implication, so long as its author takes care to embed all these things in an interesting plot. Conversely, a plotless novel cannot hope to engage the general public, no matter how well-written it may be. *Pictures from an Institution*, Randall Jarrell's episodic but imperishably funny satire of academic life, may well have been the best American novel of 1954, but it was Morton Thompson's *Not as a Stranger* that topped the bestseller lists, with Irving Stone's *Love Is Eternal* and Frances Parkinson Keyes's *The Royal Box* coming up fast in the home stretch.

Such novels have something else in common: They get no respect from scholars. In most cases, of course, they don't deserve it, but the author of *What America Read* argues that the academy's refusal to take "better fiction" seriously is also owing in large part to anti-bourgeois bigotry: "Literary scholars will read virtually any other kind of fiction before they read works of middle-class realism. . . . Novels may be popular for all sorts of reasons, but it seems that they cannot be great unless they assail the middle class." That's one of the reasons—and very likely the most important one—you've heard of Sinclair Lewis's *Babbitt* but not, say, James Gould Cozzens's *The Just and the Unjust* (1942), a novel in which the life and work of a small-town lawyer are portrayed with a subtle amalgam of irony and sympathy. *The Just and the Unjust* is a better novel, but Cozzens, unlike Lewis, made the mistake of suggesting that his decent protagonist was something other than a pitiful buffoon. After such knowledge, what forgiveness?

Gordon Hutner knows better. For openers, he knows that the American middle-class novel as a genre is full of doubt and uncertainty and that many of its characters are preoccupied with what he calls "the emptiness at the heart of modern life." He also knows that the line separating these novels from their highbrow counterparts is not nearly as bright as it seems in retrospect. One of the most valuable things about *What America Read* is the way it supplies a contemporary context for such novels as *The Great Gatsby*, which is now generally (and rightly) acknowledged as great but was in 1925 one of hundreds of novels contending for the attention of American reviewers. Yes, F. Scott Fitzgerald was a deadly serious artist, but he was also a profes-

Mr. Teachout, the drama critic of the Wall Street Journal *and the chief culture critic of* Commentary, *wrote the libretto for* The Letter, *an opera by Paul Moravec that will be premiered by the Santa Fe Opera on July 25. His next book,* Pops: A Life of Louis Armstrong, *will be published in December by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sional writer, and it is perfectly possible, as Hutner reminds us, to approach *Gatsby* as a popular novel written for the same audience that enjoyed Fitzgerald's *Saturday Evening Post* stories.

In addition, Hutner has taken a searching look at middle-class literary criticism. It's salutary to be reminded that "the writer who arguably shaped more people's reading taste than anyone else in American history" was not Lionel Trilling or Edmund Wilson but the all-but-forgotten Clifton Fadiman, who not only reviewed books for *The New Yorker* but hosted a popular radio quiz show called *Information Please!* and served as a judge for the Book-of-the-Month Club: "Fadiman reached an audience that would make today's critics searching for readers beyond academe shudder enviously. . . . Inconceivable as it is now, his 1941 anthology, *Reading I've Liked*, ranked seventh in sales among nonfiction books. Seventh!"

Fadiman's career, like the books about which he wrote, is part of a much wider cultural phenomenon. Throughout the period covered in *What America Read*, America's middlebrow culture was at its peak. It was a time when American audiences still believed passionately in the importance of high culture and American artists were prepared to meet them halfway, creating accessible art that was championed by the mass media. Just as Jerome Robbins was making jazz-flavored ballets like *Fancy Free* and Gian Carlo Menotti was writing operas for Broadway that put him on the cover of *Time*, so were middle-class novelists like Cozzens and John P. Marquand seeking to do serious work that would make sense to non-intellectual but nonetheless educated readers. What Diana Trilling wrote in 1946 about Marquand's *B.F.'s Daughter* could easily stand as an epigraph for *What America Read*: "Without transcending the high-grade commodity level, he has done a great deal to raise our standards of what a literary commodity can be. Without urging us to regard his novels as 'important,' he has done more than any writer of our time to close the dangerous gap between important and popular fiction."

But Trilling, though she was one of the shrewdest novel reviewers of the day, was too quick to dismiss Marquand and the best of his contemporaries as mere purveyors of literary commodities designed to divert the bourgeoisie. Most of their novels, to be sure, are of little or no interest today, but a not-inconsiderable number are eminently worthy of revival, and anyone who wrote a survey history of the American middle-class realistic novel that went out of its way to make a critical case for the strongest examples of the genre would do a real service to the republic of letters.

Therein, at least to my mind, lies the fundamental weakness of *What America Read*: Hutner is writing as a historian, not a critic. Moreover, he's an *academic* historian, which makes him reluctant to render literary judgment, harsh or otherwise, on the books about which he writes. Under the aspect of academic postmodernity, all art is equal, and no sin is greater than to suggest otherwise (unless the artist happens to be a member of a minority group, in which case she is automatically deemed to be more equal than others).

If I had to guess, I'd say that Hutner really likes many of the books about which he writes, and on occasion he lets the mask slip and speaks well of a novel like *The Just and the Unjust* or William Maxwell's *They Came Like Swallows* (1937). For the most part, though, he seems to be proceeding from the premise that middle-class novels deserve to be read less because they are good than because they are instructive: "They [are] often good without being great, interesting without being indispensable, accomplished without being profound. Yet why should they disappear when we read so many books from other periods no more fully realized or more vital to our understanding of the nation's literary history and the drama of its cultural production?"

This is why Hutner chose to write "a history rather than a critical monograph that might have highlighted eight or ten exemplary writers. . . . Nor did I entertain any great desire to canonize these works by insisting on one and not another." As a result, too much of *What America Read* amounts to little more than an endless stream of unfamiliar titles, none of which is singled out for extended comment, favorable or otherwise. I learned a lot from *What America Read*, but I didn't come away inspired to read very many middle-class novels of whose existence I wasn't already aware.

Would it have gotten Hutner into hot water with his watchful colleagues had he dared to recommend a dozen or so books that are worth revisiting, not merely for historical reasons, but also because they remain capable of giving pleasure for its own sake? If there's a better reason to read a novel, be it middle-class, experimental, proletarian, or merely trashy, I haven't heard of it. **NR**

ADULT WESTERN

a mental movie

When old King Colt still ruled the ribald West
With iron hand: You buttoned up your vest.

Put on your ten-buck hat, strapped on your gun
And stepped out blinking in the point-blank sun.

As you stood still: hip-booted in the heat
Of noon: Not a sound moved along the street.

Except where some crazed flies trapped out of doors
Buzzed in the razor shadows of shut stores.

As you walked warily: The hidden eyed
Felt the oiled weapon slapping at your side.

Just a slight tic, a tremor in your face,
Betrayed you to the lethal commonplace.

—RICHARD O'CONNELL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Film

Misanthropy on Tour

ROSS DOUTHAT

THE aesthetic style associated with Dave Eggers, the memoirist, journalist, novelist, and literary entrepreneur, has always been a slippery thing—instantly recognizable yet somehow difficult to describe. It's informed not only Eggers's own writing (he's most famous for *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, an account of raising his younger brother after their parents' sudden death) but a larger literary world, which has gathered itself around periodicals like *McSweeney's* and *The Believer* and their various affiliates. In Eggersland, the persistent aspiration seems to be enthusiasm tempered by self-awareness—a style that's hortatory but self-deprecating, idealistic but non-dogmatic, childlike but not childish, touching but not maudlin, and clever but not twee.

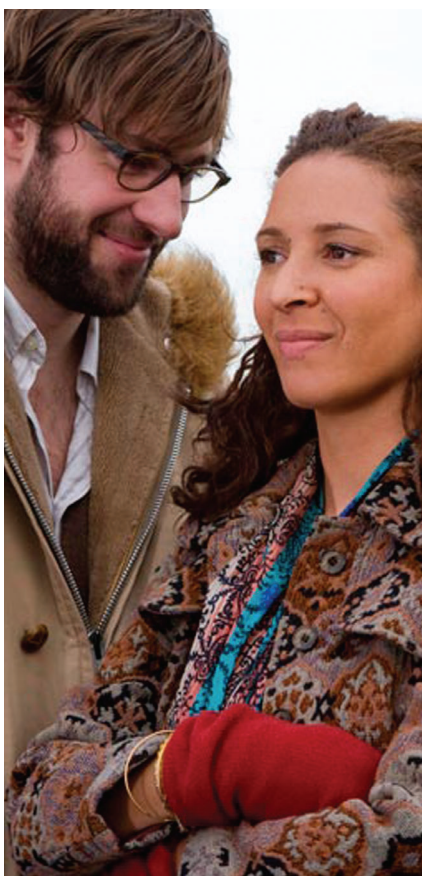
Above all, though, the Eggersian writer tries to be kind, and life-affirming, and *nice*. Perhaps the most famous piece ever published in *The Believer* featured Heidi Julavits, a rising young novelist, bemoaning the triumph of "snark" in the book-reviewing world and pining for critics more interested in "fairness and rigor" than "destructive clear-cutting." Eggers himself, amid an (extremely well-mannered) online spat with one such clear-cutter, described his intellectual pole star as the hope that "the literary world could be one of community, of mutual support, of spirited but nonviolent discourse—all in the interest of building and maintaining a literate society."

When this works, it works: Kindness and decency are rare enough in the literary world to be disarming when married to real talent. But when it doesn't—well, then you end up with *Away We Go*, a slight travelogue co-scripted by Eggers and his wife, Vendela Vida, and a movie that deserves every bit of snark that the critics of the world can hurl in its direction.

Our heroes are Burt (John Krasinski) and Verona (Maya Rudolph), an early-thirtysomething couple who embody the Eggersian virtues: They're talented without being too ambitious, humorous but non-sarcastic, and devoted to each other without being sentimental about it. They're also expecting a baby, a blessed event that sends them on a jaunt around North America in search of the best place to give their tyke the wonderful childhood he deserves.

The trouble is that most of the potential landing places are filled with people who aren't nearly as nice as they are—starting with Burt's parents (Jeff Daniels and Catherine O'Hara), who blithely announce that they're moving to Belgium two months before their first grandchild is due. Why Belgium? Who knows—and who *cares*. The point is that they're awful people—grinning, self-absorbed fools—and the audience is expected to laugh at their awfulness, sympathize with Burt and Verona, and feel righteously appalled that their unborn child will be forced to share an extended family with such jerks.

The same pattern plays itself out in Phoenix and Madison, Wis., the first two stops on their round-the-continent tour. In Arizona, we meet Verona's former office-mate (Allison Janney), a profane lush who berates her paranoiac husband and overfed kids amid strip-mall parking lots and greyhound races. Then it's off to Wisconsin, for a horrific evening with Burt's childhood friend LN (Maggie Gyllenhaal), a self-righteous earth-mother academic who murmurs about "continuum parenting" and rages against strollers.



FOCUS FEATURES

Away We Go's Burt (John Krasinski) and Verona (Maya Rudolph)

The movie turns down the satire for its final vignettes, featuring an infertile Montreal couple and Burt's Floridian brother, recently abandoned by his wife. But by then the tone has been set. *Away We Go* proves that niceness, taken as a principle, can run to intolerance as quickly as any other. The script doesn't care *why* people don't live up to the standards of its protagonists. (There's no attempt, for instance, to explain why Burt's brother's wife might have fled their seemingly happy home: She wasn't nice, and this is all ye know and all ye need to know.) It just wants to mock, deplore, and caricature them. This is a movie with the soul of a "mean people suck" bumper sticker.

Away We Go was directed by Sam Mendes, which at first feels like a mistake. Mendes, a Brit with a zeal for suburb-bashing, does glossy, self-satisfied dramas with big-time movie stars, not scruffy, self-satisfied little comedies with "where do I know her from?" actresses in important roles. Were the people who made *Little Miss Sunshine* unavailable?

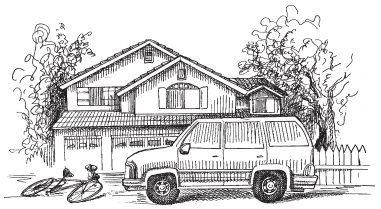
But in fact Mendes is the perfect choice. Eggers and his wife hate mean people; Mendes, on the evidence of *American Beauty* and *Revolutionary Road*, just hates America. And while this is a smaller film than he's used to making, it provides a wider canvas for his prejudices. There are nasty Americans beyond the confines of suburbia, it turns out, and Mendes is just the guy to show them to us. Grossness, self-righteousness, and self-absorption abound just about everywhere—from the mountains to the prairies to the oceans white with foam.

Well, maybe not the oceans, since that's where Burt and Verona end up—in a deserted house at the end of a deserted road, with doors that open onto an empty, windswept bay. It's supposed to be a happy ending, but really it's the perfect conclusion for a movie that occupies the place where niceness curdles into misanthropy. When you can't find anyone nice enough to share your life with you, you end up without anyone at all. **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Straggler

Magnificent Folly



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

Is it really 40 years? Good heavens! I suppose everyone who cared about such things can recall the moment with precision. I was working as a bartender at a pub in Liverpool, northwest England. The proprietor of the place, a fussy, middle-aged Irish bachelor, belonged to the category of persons who did *not* care about such things. He cared so little, in fact, that I had a running fight with him over control of the one TV set, which was in the public bar. Each time Gerry left to deliver drinks to the full-service lounge in the back, I would switch the set to the continuous news commentary from the BBC. When he returned, he'd switch it back to the vapid variety program he preferred, tutting and frowning his annoyance. The customers in the public bar, working-class Liverpudlians, sided pretty solidly with the proprietor. So much people care about history.

And such history it seemed to be! In a fragile contraption hurled by a spasm of burning gases across a quarter million miles of empty space (and built, as it happens, less than ten miles from my present home), human beings set themselves down on the surface of another world, in an alien landscape. The bustle and distractions of a busy weekend pub, and my fool boss's pursed-lip refusal to be interested in such a momentous event (*Will you be leaving the telly alone there now John for goodness' sake?*), left me with only fleeting, fragmentary impressions. I don't, for example, recall hearing Neil Armstrong's famous words: "Houston, Tranquility Base here . . . " I knew men had landed on the Moon, though, and I thought the world had changed forever.

How naïve! Nothing changed at all. The Arabs and Israelis had gone at each other hammer and tongs two years before: Four years later they did so again. The mainland Chinese, in the throes of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, were told nothing of the event. (So our newspapers reported. However, several urban Chinese have told me they knew about the Moon landing within a few hours.) Americans themselves were at least as interested in Chappaquiddick as in Tranquility Base.

Forty years on, what does it look like, really, but another TV special? Nothing followed from the Moon landing, other than, of course, five more Moon landings and the wretched, pointless, homicidal Space Shuttle program. It made nothing happen. It did not stir new thoughts in the minds of civilized men, as the great 15th- and 16th-century sea voyages did. It has brought us no potatoes, no tobacco, no Noble Savagery speculations on human nature, no *Tempest*. It made no dramatic new fortunes (though I suppose some shareholders in the aerospace companies did well). It did not make poor, inconsequential nations into world powers. Nothing unexpected turned up. The voyages, *Apollo 13*'s malfunction aside, went rigidly as planned. We found what we expected to find: dust and rocks.

I don't say these things in a spirit of dry cynicism. At the time, I was thrilled beyond measure by the Moon landing. An amateur astronomer and science-fiction fan from far back in childhood, I was precisely in the target audience for space travel's imaginative appeal. From John Wyndham's "Troon" stories in the sci-fi magazine *New Worlds* I had made the acquaintance of Rupert Brooke's 1908 poem "The Jolly Company"—"The stars, a jolly company, / I envied, straying late and lonely . . ."—with its central (and rather heavy-footed, I now see) metaphor locked in like a heat-seeking missile on adolescent angst: "God out of Heaven may laugh to see / The happy crowds; and never know / That in his lone obscure distress / Each walketh in a wilderness."

Who that knew the poem could fail to think of its closing lines when hearing those scratchy communications from a spacecraft far out in the void?

> . . . For, all the night,
> I heard the thin gnat-voices cry,
> Star to faint star, across the sky.

Like every other sci-fi fan, I supposed that having filled up the land surface of the Earth, *Homo sap.* would proceed to other worlds, to fill them up too, and mine their riches. I further supposed, as college-educated youngsters of that generation mostly did—and as sci-fi writers, including even conservative-libertarian ones like Robert Heinlein, also did—that a national government was the right agent to carry out these magnificent enterprises.

Apollo cost a mighty pile of money, though, at least by the standards of its own time—mere billions, I mean, not the trillions we are now accustomed to when speaking of federal spending. Should the U.S. government really be in the business of satisfying our imaginative hungers—even the hungers of, to judge by my pub customers and the Chappaquiddick gawpers, a geeky minority?

Well, to some modest degree, of course governments do have imaginative functions—an uplifting presidential speech, preservation of monuments, an occasional military parade, "ceremonial deism." These are merely low-budget assists to patriotic bonding, though: reminders that we are a nation, distinctive among other nations, and ready to defend our sovereignty. If the cost to the public fisc of one such decorative extra runs to tens of billions, with only the most distant and speculative prospect of future returns, the citizens of a free republic should cancel the check. Grandiose public-works projects of no practical value should be left to states of the imperial-despotic variety. "A monument to the insufficiency of human enjoyments," said Dr. Johnson of the Great Pyramid.

Cancel the check we duly did. The Apollo program ended, its great engines carted off to museums or broken up for scrap. The aerospace contractors and their lobbyists were given the Shuttle as a consolation prize; but that accomplished no more than Apollo had—nothing that could not have been done at one-tenth the price by unmanned vehicles. Now the Shuttle too is headed for the junkyard. A "next-generation" manned space program called "Constellation" is on NASA's drawing board, but nobody thinks anything will come of it, and Congress is already quietly turning off the funding spigots.

Americans who travel beyond the atmosphere in the future will do so in privately financed vehicles, or on seats rented from other governments still keen to explore "the insufficiency of human enjoyments" on their citizens' behalf. Apollo was an extravagance, a folly. But what a glorious, soul-stirring folly! **NR**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Happy Warrior

BY MARK STEYN

Protectionism Racket

Are you getting just a teensy bit tired of the ol' "Whither the Right?" navel-gazing? Even with our good friends at the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, et al. so eager to offer helpful advice, there's a limit to how much pondering of conservatism's future a chap can take. So how about, just for a change, "Whither the Left?"

Exhibit A: The European parliamentary elections. The Continent's economy has taken a far bigger clobbering than America's: Capitalism is dead, declared Cardinal Murphy O'Connor, head of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales. In France, President Sarkozy agrees, while being careful to identify the deceased as "Anglo-American capitalism." And woe betide any Continental foolish enough to have got into bed with it: In Spain, the unemployment rate is 17 percent and rising.

In theory, this ought to be boom time for lefties. As their jobs, homes, and savings vanish, the downtrodden masses should be stampeding back to the embrace of the Big Government nanny's apron strings. Instead, the Euro-Left got hammered at the polls, the center-right survived, and a big chunk of the electorate switched to the "far right"—the various neo-nationalist and quasi-fascist parties cleaning up everywhere from Northern England to the Balkans. My favorite of these new and mostly unlovely groupings is Bulgaria's Attack party, mainly because of its name. I would suggest the Republican party adopt it, but no doubt within a month or two the latest Bush scion would be claiming to stand for a Compassionate Attack movement and governors of coastal states would be declaring themselves fiscally attacking but socially surrendering, and the whole brand would go to hell.

> Why did a big chunk of the European electorate switch to quasi-fascist parties?

Perhaps it's just as well. On closer inspection, Europe's "far right" doesn't seem to go very far at all. The British National party's parliamentary victories are a very belated breakthrough for fascism, for which in Britain there were few takers back in the Thirties. So what do they stand for? They won't accept blacks or Asians as members—typical right-wing racists, eh? Also, they want protectionist laws limiting the import of foreign goods. They favor giving workers shares in their bosses' companies. And they want to nationalize the public utilities, railroad companies, and so forth. Economic protectionism. Worker cooperatives. State ownership. Boy, these right-wing nuts with their crazy ideas on free-market capitalism.

If you think the British elections are beginning to sound like the dinner-theater production of Jonah Goldberg's book, you're right—if by dinner you had in mind tripe, pork scratchings, and mushy peas washed down with 14 pints of brown ale and a knife fight. Economically, the BNP is the Labour party before the Blairite metrosexual makeover, and its voting base comes all but entirely from the old white working class abandoned by "New Labour" in its pursuit of more fashionable identity groups. Economic protectionism is not its principal appeal. But yoke economic protectionism to cultural protectionism and you've got an electorally viable combination. These are bad times, but they're not just bad economically. According to a YouGov poll, the average BNP voter is a manual worker with an annual household income of £27,000—or about £2,000 less than the national median. Two thousand quid isn't to be sniffed at, but it doesn't explain why these voters were willing to take a flyer on an openly racist party universally reviled by the media and political class and banished from public discourse.

England has (or had) a three-party system: Labour, Liberals, Tories. But on any number of issues—the European Union, immigration, crime, the remorseless one-way multiculturalism under which what were homogenous white working-class communities 40 years ago Islamize more rapidly with each passing day—on all these issues, the big three parties, plus the BBC and the rest of the elites, are in complete agreement: We don't want to talk about it. Since the election, the grand panjandrums of the Palace of Westminster have been competing to out–Lady Bracknell each other in professing how "horrified" they are by the BNP's success. Such protestations are invariably accompanied by ostentatious recital of their own multiculti bona fides, nicely parodied by Ed West in the *Daily Telegraph*: "I was just saying how awful the BNP were to my Polish cleaner yesterday. She agreed, as did my Chinese nanny, Wen or Yen, or whatever her name is. My Brazilian catamite wasn't that bothered."

If 20 percent of the U.S. electorate had voted for the American Fatherland Front or some such, you'd never hear the end of it from *Le Monde* and the *Guardian* and all the rest. But the Euro-elites have adjusted to the knuckle-draggers' *lèse majesté*, and are already congratulating themselves on holding the "far right" vote down to the low double digits. It won't be that low next time, but they'll adjust to that too. You can't blame 'em: It's easier to do that than rethink your entire worldview, never mind try to figure out anything you could actually do about these issues. I doubt the new kids on the block will be able to do anything, either. But, for a while, there will be votes in impotent rage, and the economic-and-cultural protectionism twofer will eat deep into the mainstream Left's base. They in turn will not change—for, in Britain and elsewhere, they have determined to celebrate diversity even unto societal death. NR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Order today and Save $100s!

Rare Hoard of 100-Year-Old U.S. Gold Coins Released to Public

HISTORIC U.S. GOLD ON SALE

Just discovered hoard of U.S. $10 Gold Liberty Coins Now Available

Our buyers just discovered one of the most significant European Bank hoards of U.S. gold in years. They secured 1,769 magnificent U.S. gold coins guaranteed to be over 100 years old. The vintage coins in this hoard represent dates ranging from 1866 through 1907 that uniquely represent the history of our nation in fine gold.

As low as $749 ea.

Shown larger than actual size of 27 mm in diameter

Uncirculated Gold Coins from the Past are Timeless Treasures

Each of these $10 Gold Liberty coins is certified in Uncirculated Condition. As gold values have soared with unpredictable oil prices and the falling dollar, you may never again have the opportunity to own these gold coins at this price. With the falling dollar, demand for these coins continues to escalate as collectors and investors scramble to scoop up U.S. gold coins for their pure gold content and scarcity.

Certified genuine uncirculated U.S. gold coins have historical and numismatic value that bullion gold cannot match, making these coins even more attractive.

Don't Miss This Opportunity: Order Now!

Consider that the number of U.S. coin collectors has sharply risen to over 50 million today, you may never get a second chance to take advantage of this opportunity. Order now while our limited supplies last. Buy more and save! Due to our limited supply of these coins, we must issue a strict limit of 5 coins per customer. Why pay $849 or more for similar coins? Prices and orders subject to availability, so call today. Your satisfaction is assured by our 30-day money-back guarantee.

Order More & Save

	$ per coin	shipping	total
1 Liberty Coin	$795	$15 S&H	$810
3 Liberty Coins	$779	FREE!	$2,337
5 Liberty Coins (max)	$749	FREE!	$3,745

Call Toll-Free:

1-800-642-9160 ext. 2298

New York Mint, 5577 W 78th St., Edina, MN 55439

Not affiliated with the U.S. Government

© 2009 New York Mint

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOIN!

THE FASTEST GROWING NATION ON THE PLANET

FOX NATION™

www.FOXNATION.com

AMERICA'S TALKING!™

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED